

# THE INDEPENDENT

## ON SATURDAY

Saturday 6 December 1997 (R65p) 70p No 3,475

### TODAY'S NEWS

#### Life for wife murderer

An RAF squadron leader who murdered his wife because of an obsessive love for a young Serbian interpreter was jailed for life over his "planned, callous and coolly executed act". At the end of a 13-day trial at Norwich Crown Court, Mr Justice Gage told Nicholas Tucker, 46, that he had no doubt that the murder of his wife Carol was motivated by the fact that he was besotted with 21-year-old Dijana Dudukovic, whom he had met during service with the UN in Bosnia. Page 9

#### Cover-up lawyer jailed

A solicitor and her former policeman lover who ruined their careers by telling lies about his drink driving offence were jailed at the Old Bailey yesterday. Penelope Schofield, 35, wept as she was jailed for perverting the course of justice. Detective Constable Nigel Phillips was jailed for 16 months. Schofield was told by the Recorder of London, Sir Lawrence Verner: "I have to bear in mind not only your personal position, but also the concern of the public that a practising solicitor had on this occasion, practised deception and deception against the public justice. The interest of the public makes it essential I pass a prison sentence." Page 9

#### China will be worst polluter

Today China produces only a tenth of the pollution of the United States. But by the year 2015, it may overtake the US as the world's biggest producer of greenhouse gases. The big problem is coal and the dirty industries that burn it. But it may be too late to reverse what is happening. Page 17

#### Blair warns farmers

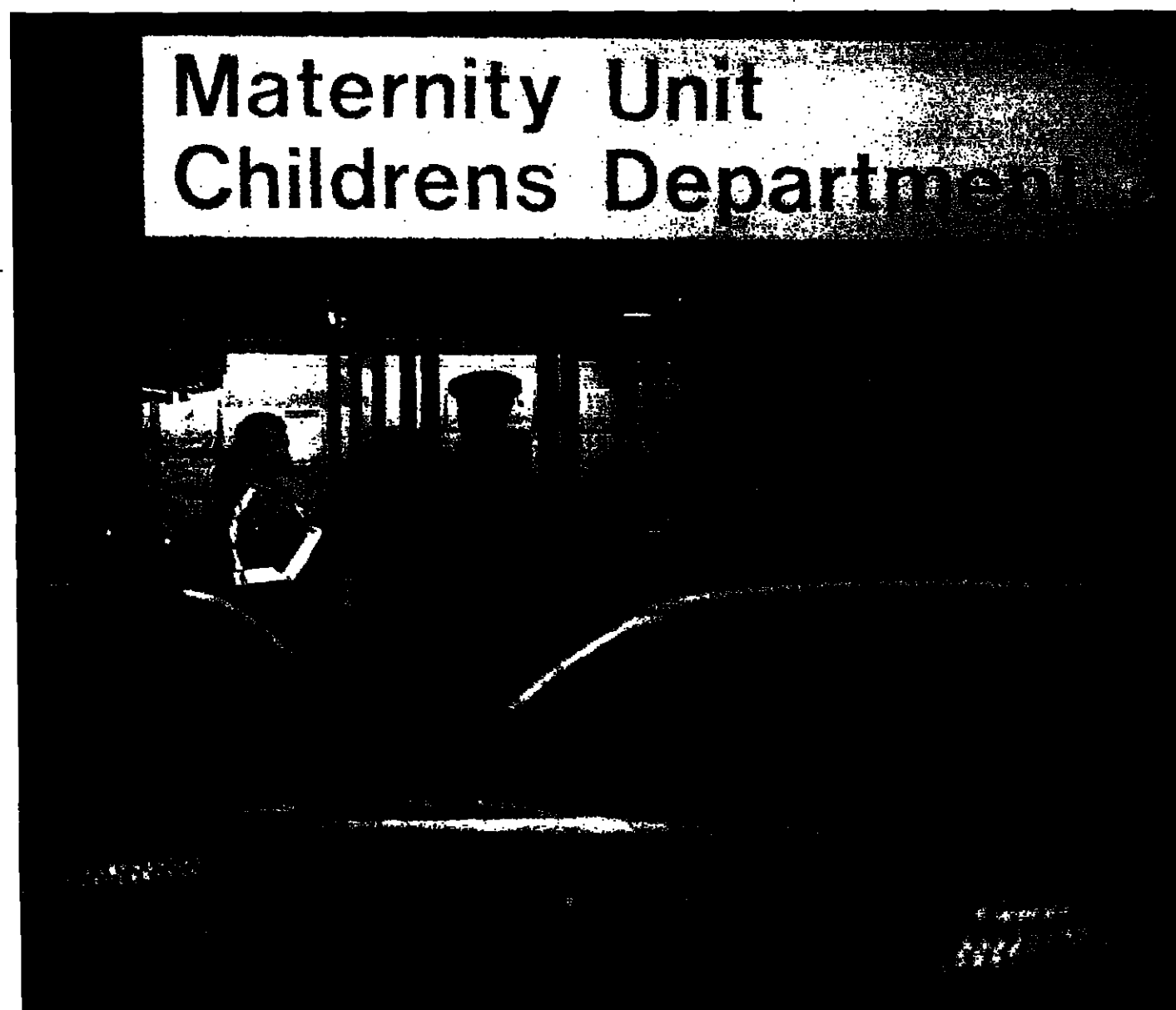
As farmers continued their protest over beef, Tony Blair said he understood their concerns but warned that they must stay within the law. He said: "We fully understand the distress and difficulties of farmers and we have been working to assist them."

"The taxpayer will pay £1.4 billion this year in support of the British beef industry and of course we do everything we can to support them. It is essential, however, that the rule of law must be upheld." Page 8

LEATHER Time Off, page 2  
TELEVISION The Eye  
CROSSWORDS Time Off, pages 5 & 14

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## Parents' nightmare as tiny baby is snatched



Basildon General Hospital in Essex, from where three-hour-old Karl was snatched, despite security cameras. Photograph: Tom Pilston

Essex police were engaged in a race against time to find a newborn baby girl snatched from her mother's side in a maternity unit. *Care Garner was at Basildon Hospital to hear a harrowing tale.*

The father was making a telephone call to relatives to share the joyful news of the birth when the baby was grabbed from her cot at the foot of her dozing mother's bed, just three hours after being born.

The baby, named Karl, was last seen being smuggled out of the hospital just before 1pm under the left arm of a blonde-haired woman, aged between 25 and 30. Karl had not been fed since being born at 9.50am.

At the time of the kidnap, Karl's mother, Tanya, was still drowsy from the anaesthetic. But the woman in the bed opposite saw what happened and raised the alarm. Maternity nurses chased after

the kidnapper but failed to catch her.

No doors in the unit were locked - they are only locked at night - so it took less than a minute for the woman to go from the first floor to the ground floor and out into the car park. She was last seen leaving the hospital grounds in the passenger seat of a black Renault Laguna being driven by a man. They accelerated at high speed the wrong way down a short road with headlights blazing. Police said it was possible that Karl was not with them because "from the maternity ward to the ground floor anything could have happened".

At a press conference Detective Superintendent David Bright, of Essex Police, appealed to anyone with any information to contact the emergency line immediately, on 01245 490990. He said people should be alert to "anyone buying baby food, baby clothes or seeking advice about how to look after a baby".

As darkness fell, the hours passed, and temperatures dropped, concern grew for Karl's welfare. Christopher Welch, consultant

obstetrician and clinical director of maternity and paediatrics at the hospital, said: "As the hours march on our concern gradually deepens... this baby is small. She requires food, milk and warmth. If she goes without, she will be seriously damaged."

He added that, without adequate milk and fluid, Karl's blood sugar levels would be affected, causing dehydration and brain damage.

Karl weighed 6lb 15oz and was wearing a hospital smock and was wrapped in a blanket.

The parents, who were a "very distressed state" last night have two other children Nicola, 9, and Ben, 4. Yesterday was Tanya's 30th birthday. Det Supt Bright said: "The mother is never ever going to forget this day. What a terrible, terrible day. It's lovely to give birth on your birthday. Terrible to lose it hours later."

Sixty police officers were preparing to spend the night searching the hospital "top to bottom" as well as the grounds. They were examining video footage - evidence that is only available to them because 13 video cameras were installed at the hospital following the inquiry into the

kidnapping of baby Abbie Humphries in Nottingham.

However, the hospital was anxious to stress that now was not the time to apportion blame.

Sue Jennings, chief executive of the hospital, explained that following the full security review after Abbie's abduction, the hospital had decided against tagging babies, adding: "In this case the tagging wouldn't have made any difference."

Measures that were taken included issuing specific instructions to parents not to let their child go with anyone they did not know. She added that, for a long time, children had not been left unsupervised in the nursery area. Asked if she felt the hospital could have had tighter security, she said: "It's always easy to do more and, until we know precisely what's happened in this case that's all I can say. We will have a future review to make sure that any other loopholes are tied up."

Tanya was admitted at 3pm on Thursday. Her pregnancy was full term and she opted for a caesarean section.

Why steal a baby? page 3

## Should you recycle this paper? Maybe not

When you've finished with this newspaper, will you, a little smugly, take it to be recycled? Charles Arthur, Science Editor, discovers that some environmentalists now think you would be better to burn it instead.

A growing number of environmentalists who have carried out detailed economic studies of the costs of recycling - a practice that has an almost religious place in the greener lifestyle - believe it may be environmentally unfriendly.

"The higher you value the environment, the better incineration comes out," according to Matthew Leach, an energy policy analyst at Imperial College's Centre for Environmental Technology.

That's a startling thought, given that used paper is rapidly becoming a raw material: in western Europe more than half of newspaper is

recycled, and the paper disposal business in Europe handles 130 kilograms (286 pounds) per head annually. Now Leach says: burn it - for instance in your fireplace. You don't speed up global warming, since 99 per cent of virgin paper comes from sustainable forests, not rainforest. And you can use the heat to save electricity.

This is not the sort of answer that consumers, who for years have been trained to obediently collect their newspapers and dump them at the local collection site, expect to hear. But it gets worse. Those local collection sites, and the few companies which in this country pulp the papers, are the worst model of recycling you can dream up. Instead, we should have kerbside collection, and recycling (or incineration) at as many locations as possible. Why? Because the fuel used by the lorries transporting it adds more to global warming than the process of making fresh paper.

"This debate seems to have become fashionable recently," said Marianne Grieg-gran of the International Institute for Environment and Development yesterday. "There have been scientific

papers in the past four years arguing that recycling might not be the best solution."

There are some glimmers of reassurance. It is always good to recycle aluminium cans, because so much electricity is needed to extract the metal from its ore, bauxite. Saving electricity means saving fossil fuel. Recycling aluminium "saves about 95 per cent of the energy," said Amelia Craighill, of the environment department at the University of East Anglia. Glass recycling is less clear-cut - but recycling can make significant energy savings. So yes, recycle that wine bottle.

But paper recycling is less simple. Maybe it should be composted on a landfill - where the methane gas produced could be burnt for energy. Or it should be burnt outright. Or it might be recycled. The environmentalists are still arguing.

The European Commission though seems to have made its mind up already. Its 1994 directive on waste management insists that by 2001, 50 per cent of paper waste should be recovered and recycled. Perhaps someone should tell them about the debate.

### INSIDE TODAY

## TAX: do you face a fine? SEE PAGE 11

Lies and schmaltz: Mary Braid's fury about Winnie's 'game show' 15/NEWS

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# 2/BRIEFING

## COLUMN ONE

### A romantic Christmas? It's as simple as ABC

Already wondering how you are going to survive the festive season? The marriage guidance specialists Relate have compiled a Christmas quiz to see whether your relationship, at least, will last as long as the turkey leftovers.

Cherida Fletcher, manager of the organisation's Wolverhampton branch, which devised the questions, said that couples should use their quiz in place of more traditional Christmas diversions. "To decide whether they need to make that appointment with Relate straight away."

The questions are as follows:

1. Did you decide together who was coming to stay at Christmas?  
A. Yes B. No C. Haven't decided
2. What do you usually buy first for Christmas?  
A. Drinks B. Your partner's present C. Other people's presents
3. What do you buy for your partner?  
A. A surprise B. Gift vouchers or money C. You wait for the sales
4. Do you remember what your partner bought you last year?  
A. Yes B. No C. You didn't get anything
5. Did you have to change it?  
A. No B. Yes C. It broke before you could use it



6. When was the last time you spent a quiet Christmas night together?  
A. Can't remember B. When the telly broke C. Never
7. How would you like to be treated at Christmas?  
A. Like you're special B. Like a lover C. You want to be left alone to sleep
8. What springs to mind when you think about Christmas?  
A. Arguments B. All the work C. Getting drunk
9. Would you love one of those Christmases that everyone else seems to have?  
A. Yes B. They're just a myth - aren't they? C. You just want to sleep
10. Do you wish those messages on the late-night radio programmes were for you and...  
A. From your partner? B. From your lover? C. What late-night messages?

According to Relate, the answers give "an accurate portrayal of the state of a relationship". Their conclusions are as follows: Mostly As, and you should talk to your partner about what kind of Christmas you really want. Bs, and you've been disappointed too many times already.

"If most of your answers are Cs, you and your partner need to do some serious talking about how to have fun together," says Ms Fletcher. "Maybe you should consider talking to Relate before it's too late."

— Jojo Moyes

## PEOPLE



Tracey Emin: Back on Channel 4 days after her last foul-mouthed, drunken performance

### Moralists primed as rebel artist goes back on TV

Fresh from her successful attempt to live up a turgid arts show on Channel 4 on Tuesday night, conceptual artist Tracey Emin is back on the channel tonight in another discussion programme.

Ms Emin, who appeared on *The Future of Painting* as drunk as a Clyde welder with the language to match before walking off set, is to appear with the novelist Will Self. Mr Self, who is hosting the show, is no stranger to controversy himself.

The show is *Something of the Night*, a pilot late-night discussion programme that will look at the week's events and will discuss whether Britain in the aftermath of the general election and the death of Diana is a more radical, less puritanical, place.

Mr Self did his best to test this thesis himself earlier this year when he was exposed as having smoked heroin on John Major's campaign plane during the election campaign, an incident that ultimately cost him his job on the *Observer*.

Just in case the combination of Ms Emin and Mr

Self is not enough for television moralists the programme plans to air the video of the Prodigy's new single "Smack My Bitch Up". The video features scenes of full frontal nudity and drug-taking and has been banned by other broadcasters. The programme starts at 11pm.

To save the moralists the trouble of complaining about the show, Channel 4 has invited on as a guest *Daily Mail* columnist Paul Johnson, the man who labelled the channel's former chief executive Michael Grade "Britain's pornographer in chief". Presumably he will be able to object to the channel's output on the spot.

The other guests, the novelist Martin Amis, the journalist Nick Cohen and the celebrity therapist Susie Orbach will be hard-pressed to get a word in.

But Channel 4 is not taking as many risks as at first we might think. The programme was pre-recorded last night.

— Paul McCann, Media Correspondent

### Man, 76, escapes wheelchair drink-drive charge

A drink-driving charge against a war veteran caught doing 8mph in his battery-powered wheelchair-style buggy has been dropped. Sam Hammond, 76, was allegedly more than twice over the legal drink-drive limit when he was stopped by police outside his home in Pitsmoor, Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

The great-grandfather, who suffers from heart problems and arthritis, was arrested and fished in a cell for six hours after the breath-test proved positive and was charged with drink-driving last September. But the case was dropped yesterday after the Crown Prosecution Service decided it was not in the public interest to pursue the charge.

Mr Hammond said: "I couldn't believe it when they arrested me - how were they going to take a driving

licence off me when I haven't got one?" The veteran of the Burma campaign in the Second World War said he had bought the buggy, which is powered by two 120-volt batteries, because he did not need a driving licence to use it.

He added: "I've never had a licence in my life because I don't think I would be a competent driver. It's all a bit daft really. I was hardly rolling about drunk and being a danger to anybody, certainly not at eight miles an hour. I had travelled two miles home from the pub when they stopped me."

"Even if I had bumped someone I was only going 8mph - that's the scooter's top speed - and I'm not sure that they would have felt it. But next time I go for a drink I'll use a cab."

## UPDATE

### EDUCATION

#### Funds for further learning dry up

Funds for further-education students are steadily declining, it was disclosed yesterday, as the cost of advertising the Government's policy on tuition fees exceeded £330,000.

In a written answer from the office from the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, it was revealed that average funding per full-time student in further education had dropped from £3,080 to £2,860 since the 1993-4 academic year.

In a separate question, the office was asked how much the Government had spent on advertising on commercial radio, television and newspapers in relation to its policy on tuition fees for university students.

The reply, from Kim Howells, minister for lifelong learning, states: "The cost for advertising, in relation to the policy on tuition fees for university students, is, for commercial radio, £222,209 and for the national press, £137,831."

— Jojo Moyes



### CRIME

#### Truce fails to stem Ulster violence

A total of 334 people have been charged with terrorist-related and serious public order offences in Northern Ireland this year, it emerged yesterday.

The figures were revealed in a written answer from the security minister Adam Ingram to the Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble. Mr Trimble had asked "how many persons have been charged with offences in connection with paramilitary beatings in 1997".

Many of the offences took place during the current ceasefire, which began in July. Despite this, the office of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mo Mowlam, has said she is satisfied the ceasefire is genuine.

The previous IRA ceasefire from September 1994 to February 1996 was broken by the Canary Wharf bomb, which killed two people.

### Letters page

We apologise to readers who received editions yesterday containing the previous day's letters page. This was due to a production error. We would also like to point out that the Bluebird evening in today's magazine is sponsored by Taittinger champagne.

### CONTENTS

Leading stories	3	Despatches	16
Home news	4	Environment	17
Race hate	5	Saturday story	19
Home news	6	Leader, letters	20
Politics	7	Comment	21
Beef crisis	8	Obituaries	22
RAF murder	9	Business	23-25
Money	10	Big picture	26
In the courts	12	Sport	Time Off, 16-25
World News	14	TV & Radio	The Eye

### TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.38	Italy (lira)	2,821
Austria (schillings)	20.13	Japan (yen)	212.75
Belgium (francs)	59.19	Malta (lira)	0.62
Canada (\$)	2.30	Netherlands (guilders)	3.22
Cyprus (pounds)	0.83	Norway (kroner)	11.67
Denmark (kroner)	10.97	Portugal (escudos)	291.11
France (francs)	9.57	Spain (pesetas)	241.07
Germany (marks)	2.87	Sweden (kroner)	12.65
Greece (drachme)	453.20	Switzerland (francs)	2.32
Hong Kong (\$)	12.48	Turkey (lira)	318,105
Ireland (punts)	1.10	USA (\$)	1.62

Source: Thomas Cook  
Rates for indication purposes only

## ZITS

by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



### Letters sold for £90,000

An archive of letters and papers which tell the remarkable story of a Jewish woman, whose struggle to survive the Second World War resulted in her marrying a Nazi, fetched £90,000 at auction yesterday.

The collection charts the suffering of Edith Hahn, a law student in Vienna at the time of the Anschluss, who spent time in two Nazi labour camps. Many of the 250 or so letters sold by Sotheby's in central London are written to two men: Hahn's first and greatest love, "Pepi", a fellow law student Dr Joseph Rosenfeld, and Werner Vetter, a member of the Nazi Party who fell so deeply in love with her that, despite knowing she was a Jew, persuaded her to marry him.

The collection was bought jointly by two private bidders, businessman Dalek Feith and his colleague Drew Lewis, who want to lend the papers to The Holocaust Museum in Washington.

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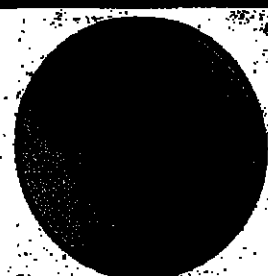
## IN MONDAY'S INDEPENDENT



**Deborah Ross  
Interviews  
Lord Chadlington**



**The Prodigy:  
can they still start  
the fire?**



**Jenny Agutter:  
flies back in  
Peter Pan**

# What is it that makes a woman want to steal a baby?

## HOSPITALS' SECURITY DILEMMA

Hospital authorities had hoped they were winning the battle against baby snatching. But Ian Burrell says that vital lessons in security have not been learned.

One might have thought that the hysteria which followed the snatching of Abbie Humphries from a Nottingham hospital three years ago would have led to a radical overhaul of security at maternity wards.

Yet the ease with which a three-hour-old baby was taken from Basildon General Hospital yesterday demonstrated how powerless hospital authorities still are when faced with a determined snatcher. After the Humphries case, the Government issued guidance to NHS hospitals. It proposed tags to identify babies, identity badging for legitimate staff, closed-circuit cameras and controls on access to hospital premises.

But it stopped short of being prescriptive: hospitals were allowed to decide which security measures fitted their circumstances.

The Basildon hospital has closed-circuit television, staff are issued with badges and internal doors have security locks. But tags can fall off babies' arms, security cameras cannot cover every corner of hospital corridors and identity badges can be forged. Other hospitals have gone further. St Thomas's, in London, has guards outside maternity wards checking ID cards and signing visitors in and out.

It was the case of Alexandra Griffiths seven years ago which stunned the nation into the realisation that babies were not even safe in a maternity ward. She was two days old when her father unwittingly handed her to a baby-snatcher posing as a health visitor at St Thomas's. When her mother, Dawn, 20, appeared on television weeping and shaking, thousands of viewers wrote or phoned in offering support.

It was a fortnight before the kidnapper, Janet Griffiths, a nurse, was spotted in the



Reunited: Dawn Griffiths with baby Alexandra, who was snatched from St Thomas's Hospital in January 1990 Photograph: David Rose

Cotswold village of Burford. She had taken Alexandra in an attempt to prevent her married lover dumping her.

Ms Griffiths was sent for treatment in a mental hospital and was released five months later. Shocking though it was, the incident was allowed to fade into history as a one-off action by a disturbed woman.

It was not until four years later, when five-hour-old Abbie Humphries was snatched from the Queen Elizabeth Medical Centre, Nottingham, that memories of Alexandra came flooding back. The baby was taken by Julie Kelley, 24, who lived near the Humphries. She spent six weeks in a psychiatric hospital after admitting the offence.

Over 15 days, while Abbie's parents, Karen and Roger, appealed for their baby's return, calls were made for security measures in maternity wards.

Since then some hospitals have introduced baby-tagging systems and closed-circuit television. But despite the notoriety of these two cases, baby-snatching is a long-standing problem in this country.

The Portia Trust, which tries to help counsel women driven to snatch babies, was set up in 1970. Ken Norman, the trust's chairman, said that at one time it was dealing with up to 40 cases a year, although the rate has fallen.

Mr Norman said improving security would not stop baby-

snatches by desperate, psychologically disturbed women. "If you made hospitals into fortresses, babies would be taken from prams in the street."

Within nine months of Abbie being taken, three-day-old Lydia Owens was snatched by a bogus visitor from Glan Clwyd Hospital in Bodelwyddan, Wales. The baby was missing for 20 hours. By the time the culprit, Susan Brooke, 39, a grandmother, appeared in court in June 1995, public sympathy for baby-snatching women had evaporated. Whereas previous offenders escaped with relatively light sentences Brooke was branded cruel and wicked by the judge who sentenced her to three years in prison.

## THE ABDUCTOR'S PROFILE

The typical baby thief will go 'window shopping' in local hospitals to look for the weakest security. Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor, looks at why women become so desperate that they snatch babies from hospitals.

Hospitals can deter abductors but they cannot keep them out altogether. John Rabun, of the US National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, who has visited Britain to advise hospital managers on security, said that although a determined abductor would evade any security cordon, the task was to make it as difficult as possible.

The typical abductor was a woman who might have miscarried and appeared pregnant. She was often not living with her partner and had planned the baby "to get him back". When she miscarried she went in search of another baby.

British experts stressed that the cases were extremely rare. Anthony Black, former head of the psychology unit at Broadmoor hospital, said the abductors, who were always women, tended to be people who had been let down, usually by a man, or suffered a set-back such as a miscarriage or a failure to conceive.

"The cases tend to figure around the break-up of a relationship or a loss of some kind. The woman may even be deluded that she has a baby. She may go through a phantom pregnancy. Some women pad themselves out to please a partner."

He said the abductors tended to be sensitive, vulnerable people who had had unhappy experiences which involved being let down or deserted.

"Ordinary people will cope with a lot of distress. They grin and bear it or try for adoption or for infertility treatment, depending on their circumstances. These women invariably turn out to have had a chequered life history and the break-up or

the miscarriage is the latest in a succession of onslaughts, insults and mishaps."

The upside was that because the babies were wanted they tended to be well looked after. "They treat them as their own. If a couple had snatched the baby one would worry that the motive was a bit more malign."

Alice Lovell, psychologist at South Bank University, London, and an expert on the effects of miscarriage, said that the idea that women who lost a baby might think of taking someone else's was a myth. "These women want their own baby. There is no evidence that miscarriage leads to abduction. To compound the loss these women suffer by assuming they might resort to abduction is very harmful."

In the US, 170 infants have been abducted since 1983, nine so far this year. Ten are still missing. Cathy Nahorny, of the US Center for Missing and Exploited Children said yesterday: "The recovery rate is very good. The babies are very rarely harmed. The women who take them raise them as their own."

She said when a new born baby was taken it was possible the woman would have faked a pregnancy keeping her partner, family and friends in the dark.

She said although there was no criminal intent they lived their lives by lying and deceit. "They are incredibly convincing con-artists."

In one case in the US, a woman whose marriage to a soldier was going through a rocky patch told him she was pregnant. She then convinced him that there was a tradition in her family going back generations that the pregnant couple did not have sex or sleep together during the pregnancy. Her husband, anxious not to upset her, accepted the story.

During her "pregnancy" she stuffed padding in her clothes and when she was "due" and her husband was away for a few days, she applied for a babysitting position - and stole the baby.

## Ruin for lawyer who lied to save police boyfriend from drink-drive charge

A disgraced solicitor wept at the Old Bailey yesterday as she was jailed for three months for perverting the course of justice to protect her policeman boyfriend from a drink-drive charge. Jojo Moyes reports



Schofield: 'Moment of madness' Photograph: James Horson

Penelope Schofield wrecked her career in a "moment of madness" when she claimed she was behind the wheel of the drunken detective's car when he drove home after a CID Christmas party. But she had left earlier by taxi, after having a row with Detective Constable Nigel Phillips because he was canoodling with another woman at the party.

The lawyer, from Hampshire, was told by the Recorder of London, Sir Lawrence Vennart: "I have to bear in mind not only your personal position, but also the concern of the public that a practising solicitor had on this occasion practised deception and deception against the public justice."

Phillips, 31, also from

Hampshire, was well over the drink-drive limit when he left the party on 6 December last year. On his way to the cottage he shared with Schofield he hit a kerb, had a puncture and drove to the police station where he was based. There he was breathalysed and arrested.

But after emotional calls from the station, Schofield rang to say she had driven most of the way home. Phillips was jailed for 16 months for perverting the course of justice and for driving while three times

over the limit. The judge said the couple's behaviour had "ruined two promising careers in which each of you had given good service to the public over a long period. That those who offend are deeply involved in the process of public justice makes it even more serious."

Phillips was near to tears as he stood to one side to allow the sobbing Schofield, 35, to be taken to the cells. He had involved the woman he loved in a "desperate attempt to keep the job he loved", said his counsel,

Michael Egan. Phillips's shame over ruining their lives led him to try to commit suicide last March, the court was told.

Mr Egan said the trial had brought home to Phillips "the full enormity and gravity" of his conduct. "He has destroyed a promising career. He has destroyed the relationship with the woman he sincerely loved."

Richard Lissack QC, defending Schofield, said it was hard to think of a greater shame for someone in the legal profession. As a lawyer she was confident, successful and highly regarded. But as a woman she was vulnerable, under confident and was always blaming herself as the result of an earlier, 13-year physically abusive relationship with another man.

When Schofield confessed to police, she said: "In a moment of madness, when I agreed to say that I had driven, I lost everything... I did it for Nigel, out of stupidity, without thinking of the consequences." Now she had "lost her name, position in the community and career which is, or was, her life. She almost certainly will be struck off by the Law Society. Mr Lissack told the court.

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**ABSOLUT DISCOVERY.**

## Police call for laser-pen study

Police superintendents yesterday called for research into the effects of laser pens, amid growing concern about their use.

At a meeting of the national association of the Police Superintendents' Association in London, half the forces said they had received reports of pens being used to temporarily blind or distract people.

The association vice-chairman, Peter Gammon, said not enough was known about their ability to cause damage or distract people.

"The issue is: are they being used by people to inflict distress or harm on other people? ... We think there should be a definitive examination of laser pens. I think there are sufficient laws to deal with someone who uses a laser pen. The issue is whether they should be freely available." Incidents reported include attacks on police officers, drivers, racehorses and the footballer Vinnie Jones.



Venus in fur: A model at the BBC Clothes Show Live at the NEC in Birmingham yesterday. Photograph: Newstream

## Businessman puts a high price on walking

Walkers are about to be invited to join an association offering healthier living and charitable goals. But it is likely to be the most expensive organisation of its type in Britain. As Stephen Goodwin discovers, serious questions need to be asked about the Serious Walkers Association.

Advertisements have been planned for outdoor magazines urging those who enjoy the "beauty and freedom of the countryside" to join the Serious Walkers Association. The title sounds like a leg-pull, conjuring up images of long-faced,

gauged figures marching along and worrying about the state of the hedgerows. But it is not.

The advertisements were placed on behalf of the SWA whose founder, Stephen Drury, a 44-year-old businessman living in Claverdon, Warwickshire, has a history of VAT fraud and bankruptcy. His aim is for the SWA to be a national body with 60,000 members by 2002.

Even before an SWA boot has taken its first public step, the association is declaring: "Every year we donate funds to many major charities. Readers are offered the prospect of 'healthier living through regular walking', challenge walks and support with planning a walk anywhere in the countryside."

No membership fee is mentioned in the advertisement but walkers who request further information may be in for a shock. Individual membership is provisionally set at £36 and life membership at £540. Even the young persons' rate (for 16- to 21-year-olds) could be £18.

By comparison, full membership of the Ramblers' Association, a charity, costs £16 a year and for local walking groups subscriptions can be as low as 50p. One club official said Mr Drury may believe that walkers are an "untapped market". If they could spend £200 on a waterproof jacket why not £36 to join the SWA?

According to a draft business plan of August 1997, by the end of 2002, the SWA wants to be grossing £2m a year and raising a further £1m a year for "good causes". The objectives were

"bold", Mr Drury said. The SWA would be offering members a lot more than existing clubs and would not be joining the access campaign.

"We are not about taking money off people for no return," he told *The Independent*. "We are in the business of letting people join an alternative to the Ramblers' which is much better organised and dedicated to good causes." Having founded the SWA, he said he would be promoting the charitable side. "I will be having nothing to do with the money," he insisted. Start-up money for the association was coming from a "very well-heeled benefactor".

Listing his own accomplishments as a walker, Mr Drury said there was no fitter 44-year-old. He had walked the Pennine Way, Land's End to John o' Groats, and across 1,000 miles of America.

But Mr Drury is also familiar with the courts. He served a prison sentence this year for threatening behaviour towards a woman after their relationship ended, and in 1995 was sentenced to three months in jail for a £46,000 VAT fraud. He was ordered to pay the £7,000 costs of the VAT case and to repay the sum defrauded.

A civil action is being brought against Mr Drury for rent arrears on his former home at Knowle, near Solihull. He has been granted legal aid.

Two magazines were planning to publish the SWA advertisement in January issues - *The Great Outdoors* and *Country Walking*, but TGO confirmed it had withdrawn the advertisement to make "further inquiries".

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1400 spin speed  
15 programmes  
was £249.99  
now £69.99  
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100 wash load  
12 programmes  
was £249.99  
now £69.99  
SAVE £180

**BOSCH** WME60 9000 1000 spin  
1100 wash load  
11 programmes  
was £249.99  
now £69.99  
SAVE £180

**WASHER DRYERS**  
Indesit 10123 1000 spin  
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**TUMBLE DRYERS**  
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**ZANUSSI** WME60 9000 1000 spin  
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**BUILT-IN COOKING**  
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### SAVE £120 ON REFRIGERATION

UP TO 70% IN STORE

**FRIDGES**  
Indesit 10123 1000 spin  
1000 wash load  
12 programmes  
was £249.99  
now £69.99  
SAVE £180

**HOVERER** 10123 1000 spin  
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## PRICE index

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## Jailed peer fails to have term reduced after assault

Lord Brocket, the disgraced peer, failed yesterday in a bid to have his five-year sentence for a £4.2m insurance fraud reduced when three judges dismissed his appeal.

The Vice President of the Court of Appeal, Lord Justice Rose, said the sentence was "not out of line" with other fraud jail terms and he could not intervene over disputes between prisoners in jail as there were other remedies available.

The appeal had been hailed as a test case over whether jail terms should be reduced for inmates assaulted in prison. The Court of Appeal last month granted him leave to appeal after hearing the peer was knifed and violently assaulted while in jail.

Lord Brocket, 45, a sporting friend of the Prince of Wales, has been in jail for 20 months and now faces a release date in August next year at the earliest.

Steven Barker, his solicitor, said after the hearing on his way to the cells to visit the peer: "We are very disappointed. Lord Brocket had his hopes up high."

Asked if Lord Brocket would apply for compassionate early release he said: "It is too early to say what will happen."

Lord Brocket was jailed at Luton Crown Court in February last year after admitting that he arranged to have four classic Italian sports cars "stolen" in a bogus raid on the family home, Brocket Hall, his 5,000 acre estate in Hertfordshire.

## Death gully revisited

A former soldier is returning to the scene of an expedition which came close to a disaster in which five of his colleagues nearly died. Rich Mayfield will set off in a 15-strong team next March on a new expedition to Low's Gully in the jungles of Borneo.

Their target is to complete the first ever descent of the gully - also known as the Place of the Dead - a 10-mile stretch of granite cliffs, massive waterfalls and thick vegetation.

In 1994, a 10-man expedition led by Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Neill should have taken 10 days on an army exercise in the area, but two officers and three soldiers were not plucked from the gully until almost a month after they set off. They were on the brink of starvation. Their five colleagues had escaped in two separate groups days earlier.

An army board of inquiry later accused Lt Col Neill of being "over ambitious" and criticised decisions made by his deputy, Major Ron Foster. No disciplinary was taken against them.

Mr Mayfield, 29, said he was optimistic the 1998 team would be more successful than the previous expedition. Asked why he wanted to return to Low's Gully, he said: "I don't like failing. When I fail I go away, become more capable and try again."

## Olive oil fails taste test

The Sainsbury supermarket chain is pulling bottles of Italian Extra Virgin Olive Oil off its shelves after it was revealed it contained oil from Greek and Spanish olives.

Although blended in Italy, and made up mostly of Italian olives, the store accepted that the label gave the wrong impression about its contents. The BBC programme *Weekend Watchdog* said the error showed up during a taste test with a chef for the show which was transmitted last night.

Sainsbury said: "We can assure customers that a full and thorough review has been undertaken of all products within the olive oil range and no other products are affected."

## Vasectomy claim fails

A couple whose marriage collapsed under the strain of caring for twins born after the husband's vasectomy yesterday lost their High Court action for damages against the doctor who carried out the operation. Deputy Judge Mark Strachan QC, who heard that Andrew and Louise Fulljoyce already had three children when Mr Fulljoyce was referred by the family planning clinic to Dr Michael Duggan in 1991, said it was a sad case, but ruled that Dr Duggan, from Stevenage, Hertfordshire, had properly carried out the operation.





Al Sharpton: "This is a vendetta against those who challenged a family not used to being questioned"

## Echoes of 'Bonfire of the Vanities' in court fury

The dilapidated courtroom in Poughkeepsie, upstate New York, has never seen a case like it - yelling lawyers, spectators cursing "white justice" and a judge struggling to gain control. It verges on comedy, but, as David Usborne saw from the gallery, it cuts to the heart of America's black-white divide.

The Pagonis defamation trial under way in Poughkeepsie, two hours north of New York City, is emerging as the Christmas pantomime to beat all others. The story is about a black woman named Tawana Brawley and about truth. Top of the bill: the Rev Al Sharpton.

There is scant joy in it, however. Its playing-out in this creaking chamber of the State Supreme Court is resurrecting one of the country's darkest and, arguably, most disgraceful episodes of racial confrontation.

For many blacks, it is a chance to advertise what they know about American justice: that, for them, it does not exist. For as many whites, it promises final reckoning for Mr Sharpton, the New York City street-preacher and politician widely thought to have been an inspiration for the scurrilous figure of Rev Reggie Bacon in Tom Wolfe's late-80s novel *The Bonfire of the Vanities*.

It began 10 years ago, on 28 November 1987, when Tawana Brawley, then 15 years old, was found in a dustbin liner by the side of the road near here, her hair matted with faeces and racial slurs scrawled on her body. She claimed she had been kidnapped by six white men, and raped and sodomised.

In March 1988, Mr Sharpton and two black lawyers, Alton Maddox and Vernon Mason, went before the press to name the man they said was the leader of the gang. He was Steven Pagonis, a white assistant district attorney of this county and the son of a local judge. Other prominent blacks, including the comedian Bill Cosby and former world boxing champion Mike Tyson, associated themselves with campaign.

Challenged by sceptical reporters on that day to provide some proof, Mr Sharpton laid down the gauntlet to Mr Pagonis: "If we are lying, then sue us... sue us - sue us. Sue us right now!"



Tawana Brawley: Crowd cheered when she insisted her story was true

Ten years on, that is what Mr Pagonis is doing. With a defamation lawsuit asking for damages totalling \$395m (£243m), Mr Pagonis, who is now 36, is setting out to prove that the trio maliciously set out to nail him.

The battle lines are already drawn. The three defendants will contend that the day before their press conference, Ms Brawley had seen a photograph of Mr Pagonis in a Poughkeepsie newspaper and identified him to them. They decided to take action, they will argue, because they believed a white-man cover-up was being perpetrated to protect Mr Pagonis from prosecution.

Mr Pagonis and his lawyer, William Stanton, will try to show that the three made no effort to seek corroboration of her claim and, therefore, that they acted in reckless pursuit of their own self-aggrandisement. An associate of Mr Sharpton later said the minister had told his colleagues that he had taken on the case to make himself the "biggest nigger in New York".

Mr Stanton faces a difficult challenge. However, he has some powerful ammunition. A report from a grand jury empanelled in 1988 to investigate the claims concludes that Ms Brawley was guilty of perpetrating a hoax and that Mr Pagonis was innocent. Indeed, there was never a trial, because no formal charges were filed.

Reminding the jury this week of Mr Sharpton's challenge to Mr Pagonis to sue, Mr Stanton declared in his opening argument: "Well, here we are. You're going to decide, we called their bluff. The Brawleys hatched this story. These defendants were the screenwriters."

As if to ensure that passions were inflamed to the maximum, Ms Brawley herself broke 10 years of silence about the case by appearing before 600 supporters, almost all black, in a Brooklyn church last Tuesday. To loud cheers and chanting, she stuck by her story, proclaiming: "I'm not a liar, I'm not crazy." So far, she has never testified to it on the Bible. Whether she will appear during these proceedings is one of their greatest elements of suspense.

Judge Barrett Hickman, meanwhile, must keep the trial on the rails. Sharpton supporters arrive daily by bus from the city and are not watching quietly. Yells of "white justice" shook the court when Judge Hickman revealed he had a letter showing Mr Sharpton and the two lawyers had been invited to testify before the grand jury. They never did. As Judge Hickman stalked from the court, the defence lawyers, enraged about the letter, screamed after him, "Judge! Judge!"

A finding for Mr Pagonis could spell disaster for Mr Sharpton. He has toned down his rhetoric and is trying to enter the political mainstream. Last month, he won a respectable showing in the New York mayoral race and next year he is expected to run for Congress. Talking to *The Independent*, he refused point blank to express regret for his words 10 years ago, or back down from his original claims. "This is a vendetta against those of us who had the audacity to challenge a family that is not used to being questioned," he insisted calmly.

Pushed further on what might have motivated Mr Pagonis to reopen the wounds that cut so deeply into both the black and white communities, Mr Sharpton declined speculation: "I get sued when I speak in America. I get sued when I think in America. Please, please don't make me think."

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(1st - 31st December 1997)

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## Nuclear waste timebomb threatens future generations

Low-level radioactive nuclear waste is seeping into the Welsh water supply. But is it dangerous? Ian Burrell hears the warnings from nuclear physicists and the reassurances from the industry.

Frank Barnaby has spent a lifetime studying both military and civilian nuclear projects all around the world, and right now he has special concerns for the people of Cardiff.

The nuclear physicist and former director of SIPRI, the famous international peace institute in Sweden, believes local people may be at risk of passing on serious medical condi-

tions to future generations because their water supply contains tiny traces of the radioactive material, Tritium.

The radionuclide is used by local company Nycomed Amer-sham in the manufacture of equipment used by drug companies to develop new products and by medical researchers for studying the activity of cells.

"There is some indication now that Tritium can induce genomic instability. In other words, the radiation can damage the chromosome but the damage may not show up," said Professor Barnaby.

"It now appears that the damage can come in the second, third or even fourth generations." The damage to cells could lead to cancer and other conditions, including Alzheimer's and motor neurone disease. Envi-

ronmentalists have dubbed Cardiff the Tritium capital of Britain.

Trevor Jones, a Cardiff-based researcher in radioactive isotopes and radiation, said: "Because the energy level of Tritium is so low it is very difficult to measure. In the US it has taken two generations before the effects of Tritium have manifested themselves in cancers or central nervous disorders."

The epidemiologist Professor Alice Stewart, from Birmingham University, is also concerned, after making a study on the long-term health effects of those exposed to the Hiroshima bomb. She said that her latest research, to be published next year, will show that the dangers from low-level ionising radiation are 10 times greater than previously thought. The scien-

tists were all present at a conference in Cardiff yesterday called to discuss possible dangers to the local population from low-level radiation.

The conference was called after it was revealed that Amer-sham made an application to store 285 drums of radioactive waste on the site.

The company said yesterday that the waste was merely the standard laboratory equipment worn and used by scientists when handling minute quantities of the radionuclides Tritium and Carbon 14.

Spokesman Alan Huw Smith said Tritium was stored in steel jars within steel containers. Although, as a hydrogen, tiny amounts of tritium escaped into the air, the company operated well within agreed safety levels.



Season of hope: A homeless man in Kensington, west London, who may be able to find shelter in temporary accommodation which has been arranged by the homeless charity, Shelter, over the Christmas period. Photograph: Andrew Buurman

## BBC banks on a comic Christmas

Comedy heads the festive fare in BBC TV's £42m Christmas season, with a "triple whammy" of special episodes of *One Foot In The Grave*, *Men Behaving Badly* and *They Think It's All Over* one after each other.

Other Christmas Day treats unveiled today are the Hollywood films *The Flintstones*, starring John Goodman, and *The Mask*, starring Jim Carrey.

Boxing Day brings *The Vicar Of Dibley* and *Before They Were Famous II*, while Teletubbyland takes on a festive air for five weekday episodes.

The ubiquitous Spice Girls pop up twice on BBC1 over the Christmas season - once on *Live* and *Kicking* and again as hosts of *Top Of The Pops*. Lily Savage, Mrs Merton, Shirley Bassey and Bette Midler are among the stars featured in programmes over the period.

Peter Salmon, controller of BBC1, said: "BBC1 has an irresistible line-up of comedy and entertainment."

But Christmas drama in-

cludes an adaptation of Wilkie Collins' Victorian ghost story *The Woman In White*, as well as visits to *Ballykissangel* and *East-Enders*.

*Madame Butterfly* is BBC2's Christmas Day opera offering and the actor Simon Callow once again becomes Charles Dickens in *A Christmas Dickens*.

*Modern Times* "The Shrine" explores the public pilgrimage to Kensington Palace in the wake of Diana, Princess of Wales's death and *Arena* pays tribute to the banana and the cigar.

The BBC traditionally triumphs in the Christmas ratings as it pumps resources into a period when large audiences are available but advertising pickings are slim.

Last year's *Only Fools And Horses* trilogy won record-breaking audiences.

But there is one empty place at this year's Christmas feast - no new *Wallace and Gromit* adventure, as the animator Nick Park explores new projects.

## Court defeat for Zito killer

The schizophrenic killer of the musician Jonathan Zito was yesterday barred by the Court of Appeal from bringing a damages action against a London health authority over its alleged failure to care for him.

Three judges allowed an appeal by Camden and Islington health authority against a High Court decision that Christopher Clunis was entitled to sue.

The ruling also blocks a damages action brought by Zito's widow, Jayne, against Clunis with a view to his including her compensation in his claim against the authority.

Lawyers for Clunis may still petition the law lords for leave to appeal against the decision.

Clunis was detained indefinitely in Rampton hospital in 1993 after admitting stabbing Zito to death at Finsbury Park Tube station.

Lord Justice Beldam, sitting with Lord Justice Potter and Mrs Justice Bracewell, held that it would not be fair or reasonable to hold the authority liable to Clunis for the consequences of his crime.

## Inquest on gas death teenager

An inquest opened yesterday on a church-going teenager who had just won a role in an anti-drugs play and who is believed to have died after sniffing lighter gas.

Chantelle Bleau, 16, collapsed at a friend's house on Monday after sniffing the gas and died in hospital. She had just won a role in a play, *Deadly Deals*, which has been on tour at schools in her home city of Bradford, west Yorkshire.

She and her parents, Richard and Pat Bleau, were members of the Abundant Life Church, where she sang in the choir and helped in the crèche.

The inquest was opened and adjourned yesterday.

Mrs Bleau told a local paper that she and her husband were told Chantelle had fallen and bumped her head at a friend's house.

She arrived at the hospital as staff were trying to revive Chantelle. Neither she nor her husband knew that Chantelle experimented with drugs.

## Special needs pupils get £11m boost for access to schools

The Government yesterday announced a boost of £11m to help mainstream schools become more accessible to special needs children. Estelle Morris, the schools minister, told MPs that the almost three-fold increase on the £4m set aside by the previous administration for the Schools Access Initiative was the most that had ever been spent on the initiative in any year.

The initiative is part of the Government's overall commitment to improving special needs education, which is the subject of a consultative Green Paper, entitled *Excellence for All Children*. Ms Morris said: "In our Green Paper... the Government committed itself to announcing a significant ex-

pansion in the School Access Initiative, to help mainstream schools become more accessible to children with disabilities. We are honouring that commitment. We inherited funding for this initiative running at £4m a year.

That sum would be increased to £11m next year - "the most that has ever been spent on the initiative in any year."

She said all mainstream schools would be eligible for support under the initiative, which is designed to increase physical access to mainstream schools and which she described as "an important part of our programme to help disabled children attend mainstream schools".

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# Blair points to a new image for EU presidency

Tony Blair yesterday opened festivities for Britain's forthcoming Presidency of the European Union, unveiling a spanking new logo for the event and vowing to find a European 'Third Way' to the sunlit economic uplands. Rupert Cornwell went along to watch the fun at Waterloo Station.

Hand it to New Labour: they're not ones for the subtle approach. At exactly 11.30am in the modern and dynamic setting of the Channel Tunnel rail terminal, a modern and dynamic Eurostar express glided in to Platform 24, and a modern and dynamic Prime Minister launched Britain's modern and dynamic stewardship of the EU for the first six months of 1998.

True, the specially chartered train had come only from Clapham Junction, not Brussels, for the occasion. But it was decked out in the new logo of 15 different stars, designed and painted by children from each EU member country, and whose image Downing Street and the Foreign Office had been guarding beforehand as tightly as the Trident missile launch codes. And like everything else yesterday, the logo was on message.

The children who produced it had worked in teams. Mr Blair

said, "And we want a Europe that works together as a team. A Europe in which our countries retain their distinctive identities as the children do in the logo, but work together to tackle common problems for

the practical benefit of all." As with most set-piece Euro-occasions, the air was thick with pious generalities. The British presidency was a test of British leadership and Europe's capacity to embrace change

(and - he might have added - a test for the Government's organisational skills, given the 50 ministerial and summit meetings, 150 gatherings of senior EU officials, and 1,500 expert working groups it must chair

over the six months to 30 June). Like Prime Ministers past and probably future, he rallied against the "cost and waste" of the Common Agricultural Policy. Dutifully, Mr Blair promised to work for a suc-

cessful launch of the single currency, in which Britain of course will not be taking part. Once again, he stressed the importance of the EU enlargement negotiations that begin on 31 March, and promised new com-

mon action on crime, drugs, and the environment. Tony "indecision, vacillation and, let's face it, anti-Europeanism" were a thing of the past, he vowed. Most striking perhaps was his commitment to a "Third

Way" for Europe, pitched between outmoded state intervention and unrestrained laissez-faire capitalism.

It would depend on "education not regulation", and on open markets rather than protectionism. The crucial tests would come over completion of the single market, and reform of Europe's over-rigid labour markets.

But Mr Blair will only put flesh on these bones in January, with a speech detailing Britain's plans for the presidency. Yesterday, he devoted scarcely a word to such unpleasantnesses as the row over Britain's exclusion from the single currency inner council, and the ban on beef exports. Britain would be a leader of Europe, he insisted. But he did not say how it would achieve this while shunning the common currency.

But at least there was that logo, 15 cute little stars that looked like multicoloured starfish, painted by 30 cute little children who were guests at Downing Street yesterday.

It looks harmless enough, certainly less risky than the logo marking the last British EU presidency in 1992. That one depicted a lion putting its head into the Euro-flag's circle of stars - only to have it comprehensively bitten off when the pound was driven from the ERM on Black Wednesday.

This time though, it is Italy which may be miffed. Bang in the middle of the stella italiana sits not an Olivetti, a Fiat, or a Ferrari - but a pizza.

Hands on approach: Tony Blair pointing to the new star logo designed and painted by children from the 15 member states of the EU

Photograph: Tom Pilton

## Labour ministers accused of conducting 'government by review'

Ministers were accused of "government by review" last night as a full list revealed a total of 54 different such exercises launched since 1 May. A monitoring exercise by the Conservatives, completed yesterday, shows the extent of the inquiring and investigating which is going on across Whitehall. From the comprehensive spending review, taking in all departments, to the small-scale review of silicone breast implants, almost every aspect of government is involved.

The Conservatives claim there is a stark contrast between the amount of re-

viewing which is going on and the bold words of the Labour leadership. Andrew Cooper, director of political operations for the Tories, said reviews were a "characteristic" of this Government.

"It's become a habit," he said. "The Government which talks about hard choices seems to be extremely adept at putting things into reviews rather than taking decisions. This is a party which had 18 years to prepare for government."

A Downing Street spokesman said there had in fact been plenty of real governing go-

ing on. Within days of Labour coming to power the control of interest rates had been handed to the Bank of England. Since then there had been, among many other initiatives, the Windfall Tax, referenda on devolution for Scotland and Wales, the abolition of the Assisted Places Scheme in independent schools, a ceasefire in Northern Ireland, a Referendum Bill for London, health action zones and a Crime and Disorder Bill.

"It isn't unreasonable after 18 years that a new government should look at whole areas of policy. Also, some of the big deci-

sions the government has made were taken in weeks, if not days," he said.

● Government reviews  
Comprehensive spending review;  
Bureaucratic burden on teachers;  
Criteria used in considering licence applications for export of conventional weapons;  
The law relating to surrogacy; The law relating to silicone breast implants; Proposed NHS Private Finance Initiative schemes; Breast cancer screening services; London health services; Arrangements for celebrating the millennium; National Lottery; Film policy; Sport on television; Compulsory Competitive Tendering regulations; Transport policy; The roads programme; Buses; Enforcement of rules on welfare of animals; exported live to the Continent; Inoculation as a


substitute for rabies quarantine; Milk Development Council; International Development policy; Economic regeneration in Wales; Proposals for reform of civil litigation and legal aid; Crown Prosecution Service; Private finance machinery; Tax and benefits system; The Post Office; Programme to identify technology opportunities; Effectiveness of export promotion programmes; Steps to strengthen democratic control of public water authorities in Scotland; Scottish Enterprise; Ways in which social rented housing is supported in Scotland; Slys Bridge tolling arrangements; Transport policy in Scotland; Scottish roads programme; Code of practice on access to government information; Ministerial accountability; Non-

departmental public bodies;  
Child Benefit;  
Welfare-to-Work task-force;  
Social Exclusion Unit;  
Family Policy Committee;  
Pensions;  
Long-term welfare; Disability benefit;  
Industrial injuries compensation;  
Royal Commission on long-term care;  
Immigration charging by national museums;  
Immigration detention policy;  
The coal industry;  
Level of Cabinet salaries;  
Party funding;  
The handling of the BSE crisis;  
Dependent territories;  
The electoral system.

— Fran Abrams, Political Correspondent

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# 8/BEEF CRISIS

## Blair warns farmers to stay within the law

Farmers were given scant hope of significant extra compensation for BSE last night as ministers warned that blockades of ports must stop. Fran Abrams watched the developments.

Protesting beef farmers must stay within the law, the Prime Minister said yesterday. But he failed to signal any new money which might help them over the latest crisis.

"We fully understand the distress and difficulties of farmers and we have been working to assist them," Mr Blair said at the launch at Waterloo station of the festivities for Britain's forthcoming presidency of the European Union.

"The taxpayer will pay £1.4bn this year in support of the British beef industry and of course we do everything we can to support them. It is essential, however, that the rule of law must be upheld," he said.

But Mr Blair's official spokesman was underlining the Government's reluctance to dig deeper into its pockets.

"The Government is keeping in touch with the issues," he said. "But as the Prime Minister made clear... on Wednesday, there is no European pot of gold which we can go to."

He added that of the £4bn spent in the UK in 1996-97 in connection with the Common Agricultural Policy, £1.9bn had gone to the beef sector, of which £1.4bn went on BSE-related spending.

The warning came as it emerged that Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, will today urge the Government to tap EU funds to help beef farmers at a meeting in Copenhagen of the liberal party leaders from around Europe.

In Cardiff yesterday, the Secretary of State for Wales, Ron Davies, held a 90-minute meeting with farmers' leaders who travelled from Holyhead and Fishguard to air their grievances. Around 200 farmers and their wives crowded the steps of the Welsh Office when he emerged.

It also became clear that an order would be laid in Parliament to formalise the ban shortly, and that it would come into force within two weeks.

The shadow agriculture minister, Michael Jack, said the government should "come clean" over what it planned to do to help the farmers.

"Playing hard and loose with the anxieties of anxious and desperate farmers is irresponsible government," he said.

"The Government must also make clear where the money will come from to fund the package they propose. It must not be

a rob-Peter-to-pay-Paul exercise. Any compensation package should be to the benefit of the hardest-pressed and not leave other areas out."

Later, a Labour source accused him of "teetering on the edge of condoning violence by strikers".

It became clear last night that the options open to the Government on how to compensate farmers were limited.

A spokeswoman for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food said there were no plans to change the over-30 month scheme despite a statement by a minister that he was unhappy with its operation.

Jeff Rooker, the agriculture minister, said farmers were getting hundreds of pounds for "clapped out old milkers" which used to be worth "a fiver".

The Maff spokeswoman also indicated that a special payment to hill farmers of £60m last year was unlikely to be repeated at the same level.

If farmers are to be given the money they are demanding - some have claimed they need almost £1bn - the only source would be Europe. Maff said £980m was available to Britain under a scheme to compensate for the rise in the value of sterling, £340m of which would come from the exchequer. But Europe's contribution would be deducted from payments by Europe direct to the Treasury.



Warning shot: Protesting farmers confront an Irish lorry driver at Holyhead

Photograph: Brian Harris

## DAIRY FARMS UNDER FIRE

Welfare standards on dairy farms were criticised yesterday in a report commissioned by the Government. It said levels of lameness among dairy cattle were "unacceptably high" and called for urgent action to end suffering on farms.

Studies showed an average of 55 per cent of cattle were going lame each year and levels were rising.

Some farmers were accused of not taking the problem seriously - leaving cattle in pain and distress even though lameness led to reduced yields.

The report by the Farm Animal Welfare Council, an independent body of farming experts, blamed intensive farming methods and poor management.

Too many animals were being housed in inadequate cubicles or forced to stand in slurry, wet straw or were walked along poor tracks, causing foot and leg problems.

The report laid before agriculture ministers said: "Lameness is almost always a painful condition and it interferes with accountability to interact fully with her environment, especially her social environment, hence it is a major animal welfare issue. There are many farms where lameness is causing unnecessary pain and distress."

## Irish union leaders head for Holyhead to stake their case

Irish farmers' leaders travelled to Holyhead last night to plead for the blockade to end.

Frank Allen, who represents 30,000 dairy farmers, told Welsh farmers they were aiming at the wrong target: "The solution to your problems lies with the UK Government. We will suffer grievously if your action continues much longer."

Mr Allen, president of the Irish Creamery and Milk Supply Association, accused the British Government of failing to appreciate the crisis in farming and make use of EU compensation funds for the industry.

But as Irish companies and the Road Haulage Association threatened to sue the British for loss of business, farmers showed no sign of abandoning their campaign.

RHA spokesman, Daniel Hodges, said: "It's not a question of whether farmers do or do not have a legitimate dispute.

It's a simple question of whether or not we wish to see a return to the dark days of the Seventies and early Eighties when whole sections of British industry and the economy were effectively held to ransom by anyone with a grievance."

This week's action by farmers was not "helpful" to the association's efforts to secure compensation for losses incurred during the blockade by French farmers at Calais last year.

The forces policing the farming protests have to deal with competing interests. While their primary duty is to keep the peace, they have to balance the right of businesses to carry on their activity against the freedom of farmers to protest.

Senior police officers have considerable discretion in carrying out their duties, and this can lead to claims of either being too lenient or harsh with

protesters. For example, neither North Wales police or Dyfed Powys police have yet arrested anyone at the Holyhead or Fishguard protests. In contrast there were three arrests - and one charge - after a similar protest at Dover.

Yet the Welsh forces insist that they will do everything necessary - including arrests - to ensure that lorries get through. The defining factor is likely to be the level of agreement, if any, between the lorry drivers, port authorities and the protesting farmers over the nature of the demonstrations. If there are such deals officers are likely to take more of a back seat.

Police in North Wales said they are considering criminal damage charges over the tossing of beef burgers into the sea by demonstrators at Holyhead.

More protests were planned last night, with new pickets expected at Plymouth.

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# 9/RAF MURDER

## RAF officer guilty of wife's murder in fake car crash



Dijana Dudukovic: Denies all knowledge of the murder

A senior RAF officer was yesterday sentenced to life imprisonment for killing his wife. Kim Sengupta describes how Squadron Leader Nick Tucker's obsessive love for a Serbian interpreter led to murder.

Squadron Leader Nicholas Tucker prided himself on being meticulous and careful, and he planned the "perfect murder" of his wife meticulously and carefully. The prizes he must have felt so near to his grasp were a new life with Dijana Dudukovic, a beautiful woman half his age, and more than £300,000 from his wife's life insurance.

But the elaborate planning that went into staging a car crash which killed 52-year-old Carol Tucker was unravelled by painstaking investigation by detectives who simply refused to accept the Royal Air Force officer's account of an accidental death. Tucker had throttled then drowned his wife

in the river Lark at Lackford, Suffolk, in July 1995 before faking the crash.

Yesterday, Tucker became the most senior officer ever to be convicted of murder outside a war zone. After a 15-day trial, a jury took seven and a half hours to find him guilty on a majority verdict of 10 to 2. Sentencing him to life imprisonment, Mr Justice Gage said: "This was a planned, callous and coldly executed act. The motive for it is that you have become besotted with a young woman interpreter you had met while serving with the [United Nations] forces in Bosnia. This is an appalling crime."

Detectives who arrested Tucker described his arrogance and condescension towards them. Detective Chief Inspector Michael Bier, in charge of the investigation, said: "The Squadron Leader thought he had planned the perfect murder, he was too cocky. He was a deceitful man who had planned the murder of his wife, a woman who was a devoted wife and mother, supportive and loyal."

While carrying out investigations in former Yugoslavia, Det Ch Insp Bier and his

team discovered that a former boyfriend of Ms Dudukovic had died in a car crash under suspicious circumstances, and she had been interviewed by the local police. However, officers pointed out, that accident had taken place in 1993 before she met Tucker, and there is no suggestion that she had any connection with the murder of Mrs Tucker.

Ms Dudukovic said about the accident: "Yes I was interviewed by the police but it was not my fault. This was a horrible thing to happen to someone close to you." She is now married and living in Switzerland. She did not give evidence in court, and has said she knows "nothing about the murder".

The Tuckers' daughter, Vanessa, gave evidence against her father in court, describing how her mother had suspected he was having an affair just a few weeks before she was killed. Her brother, James, has stayed with his father.

After the case Tucker's solicitor, David Shipman, said that his client maintained his innocence and an appeal would be lodged on the grounds the verdict was "unsafe".



Sqn Ldr Tucker: 'Besotted' with woman he met in Bosnia

### Police found husband had double motives of sex and money

When Dijana Dudukovic was interviewed in Zurich by British detectives following the murder of Carol Tucker, they made no secret of the fact that they were investigating whether she could be a spy.

As details emerged about the liaison between Squadron Leader Nicholas Tucker and the daughter of a Serbian army colonel alarm bells began ringing at the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Office. They discovered that the Royal Air Force officer had been making inquiries with agencies dealing with refugees and asylum seekers. One fear was that he may have been used, unwittingly, to provide avenues of escape for suspected war criminals.

Tucker told the police that his inquiries with the agencies were on behalf of Ms Dudukovic's family who had become refugees in the former Yugoslavia.

After leaving Bosnia Ms Dudukovic moved into the Geneva home of a United Nations official dealing with refugees, Bertrand du Pasquier. She is now married and living in Zurich. Speaking at her home Ms Dudukovic said: "The police tried to make me out to

knocked unconscious, and did not know how she had died.

At least that was the story that he tearfully told the police, paramedics, doctors, his children Vanessa and James, and his wife's family.

But detectives were sceptical from the start. Tucker told them he had been driving at more than 50mph, but the damage to the car was so slight that accident investigators were convinced it was going no more than 10mph when it struck the riverbed.

The river was no deeper than 3ft, and at points only 18in. Mrs Tucker was known to have a fear of water, but did not appear to have attempted to scramble on to land. A post-mortem examination revealed that she had haemorrhaging in both eyes, indicating asphyxiation, and there was bruising consistent with finger marks on her chest, and cuts and scratches to the back, left arm and left upper arm.

As well as money, sex was a motive for murder, according to the police. Sqn Ldr Tucker had volunteered for a six-month posting as a United Nations military adviser in Bosnia where he had met 21-year-old Dijana Dudukovic, who was working as



Nicholas and Carol Tucker on their wedding day

be some kind of a spy, but I do not know anything about that.

"I am not a spy and I know nothing about my wife's death. The police say he killed his wife because he wanted to be with me. They are saying he murdered her so he could live with me. But that is not true."

An MoD source said: "Think of the equation - a British officer infatuated with the daughter of a Serbian colonel, knowing that man had links with the senior echelon of the Krajina Serb faction. Inquiries were carried out."

Tucker had become besotted with the beautiful woman half his age but he was also married to a 15-stone wife four years older than himself with whom marital relations had effectively ceased. However, if Carol Tucker died, he would get £136,000 from various life insurance policies. If she died in a car crash the figure would go up to £307,500.

On the night of 21 July 1995 that is what happened. Driving home with his wife after dinner at the Red Lion, in Icklingham, Suffolk, Tucker missed a turning and set some deer on the road. His wife grabbed the steering wheel and the car plunged into the River Lark. Mrs Tucker was found dead, face down in shallow water. Tucker had been

an interpreter. The RAF officer, then 44, was plainly hooked on her. He was to tell the court at his trial that he found Ms Dudukovic "very flirtatious, fascinating to be with, very vivacious" and, incidentally, "a good interpreter".

They made an unlikely couple, the small plump bespectacled officer and the glamorous, 6ft-tall blonde. According to another officer serving there at the time, such was Ms Dudukovic's hold on the squadron leader that military operations began to be run on her "whim".

Tucker arranged for Ms Dudukovic to get a visa for Britain, and in June he spent a week with her in the RAF club in Piccadilly, central London. In court, the officer admitted having a brief affair with Ms Dudukovic but stated that the sexual side of their relationship had been a "bit of a disaster". The two occasions on which they tried to make love had ended in failure. He added: "To put it bluntly I couldn't hack it."

He claimed that Ms Dudukovic simply became a good friend. But this appears not to tally with "schoolboyish" love letters he sent to her. In one he had written repeatedly, line by line, "I love you" over six pages. — Kim Sengupta

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## Taxman prepares to fine 1.5 million as deadline looms

Up to 1.5 million people face fines for failing to complete the new-style tax self-assessment forms in time. Louise Jury says the stress of filling in the boxes even forced one taxpayer in West Yorkshire to call the Samaritans.

Almost one in five taxpayers have not returned the Inland Revenue's new forms, only weeks before the 31 January deadline. A MORI survey indicates the tax man is awaiting returns from 1.7 million taxpayers, 42 per cent of whom say they have not got around to filling them in.

Another 16 per cent say they are having difficulty and are awaiting help. Those failing to return the forms in time face an immediate £100 fine and the possibility of investigation -

people out there who need specialist advice and are unsure where to turn for help. Some have had to resort to family and friends, which is not ideal." The ICAEW found that of those who had returned their forms, more than a third had had difficulties completing them and half sought advice.

The most common source of advice was a chartered accountant but this still accounted for only 28 per cent. Many turned to family and friends and 3 per cent or less went to their employer or to a bank or building society.

The South-west of England had the most taxpayers who completed the form with ease, with the Welsh, followed by those in Yorkshire and Humberside, finding it the most difficult. Londoners were most likely to seek advice.

Richard Shooter, a self-assessment expert from a Leicester firm, called for the £100 fine and interest charges



Snowed under: The Inland Revenue is in overdrive, but 20 per cent of taxpayers have still not returned the new forms, due on 31 January. Those failing to deliver them by then face a £100 fine and the possibility of investigation by the Revenue.  
Photograph: David Rose

Important information  
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bringing in millions of pounds in penalties. Interest on tax owed will be 9.5 per cent from that date and a surcharge of 5 per cent will be imposed on anyone who still has not paid by 28 February. Anyone failing to make their return by 31 July faces a second £100 fine.

Although most people found the forms easy to fill in, problems were evident from 300,000 returns rejected by the Revenue already for "serious errors or omissions".

Anita Monteith, chairman of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which commissioned the survey, said: "This is a new and complicated tax regime, causing massive problems to taxpayers."

"There are obviously many

to be deferred to the end of March to give people more time to sort out problems. But an IR spokesman said: "People will be aware of the importance of the January deadline and we are aiming to get every return back next month." They were delighted by many of the survey's findings, he said. A majority of people who had completed their tax forms had found them easy to complete. Michael Jack, financial secretary to the Treasury, predicted after a pilot study in Leicester in 1996 that at least 15 per cent of taxpayers would be fined at least £100, adding up to nearly £150m. The forms went out in April to 9 million high earners, people who are self-employed and those with more than one source of income.

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# 12/IN THE COURTS

## Life for Kayleigh's 'depraved' killer

Nine-year-old Kayleigh Ward may have been streetwise. But her intuition could not save her from John O'Shaughnessy, who lured her to a river bank, then raped and murdered her, says Ian Burrell.

Kayleigh Ward had only popped out for a bag of chips. It was an errand for a woman who shared the hostel in Chester, Cheshire, where the nine-year-old had lived since her family had been evicted from their council house for rent arrears.

But it was on the way back from the chip shop last December that the child bumped into another resident of the hostel, John O'Shaughnessy. The chips were never delivered. O'Shaughnessy, who today

starts a life sentence for Kayleigh's murder, was described as a "drifter and shifter" who hung around the pubs. He had arrived at the hostel a month earlier with his pregnant girlfriend and her three children from a previous relationship.

When the 31-year-old suggested that Kayleigh took a walk with him by the river bank she went along. Her impoverished upbringing had forced her into a street life where she felt at home in the city centre, making friends with travellers and older children.

But Mold Crown Court was told during O'Shaughnessy's trial that at a remote spot by the River Dee, he fell upon the girl, barely four feet tall, and raped her. "I'll tell my mum, I'll tell my mum," she sobbed during the attack. As she walked away in tears, O'Shaughnessy determined that she could not escape, and strangled her with his belt and her tights.

He threw her body into the river. Then he took what John Rogers QC, for the prosecutor, described as "carefully calculated steps" to avoid detection. He told his girlfriend that his clothes had become muddy in a fight and returned his boots to the shop where he had bought them, saying they were marked.

When Kayleigh's mother became worried that her daughter had not returned home nearly a day later, O'Shaughnessy was one of the most zealous in the search party.

He was interviewed several times by police and an attempted drug overdose fuelled suspicions. But it was not until late February, two months after the murder, that he finally cracked. The body was found in the riverbed mud on 10 February and O'Shaughnessy made a midnight call to police to say: "I killed Kayleigh Ward."

Yesterday, Mr Justice Mau-

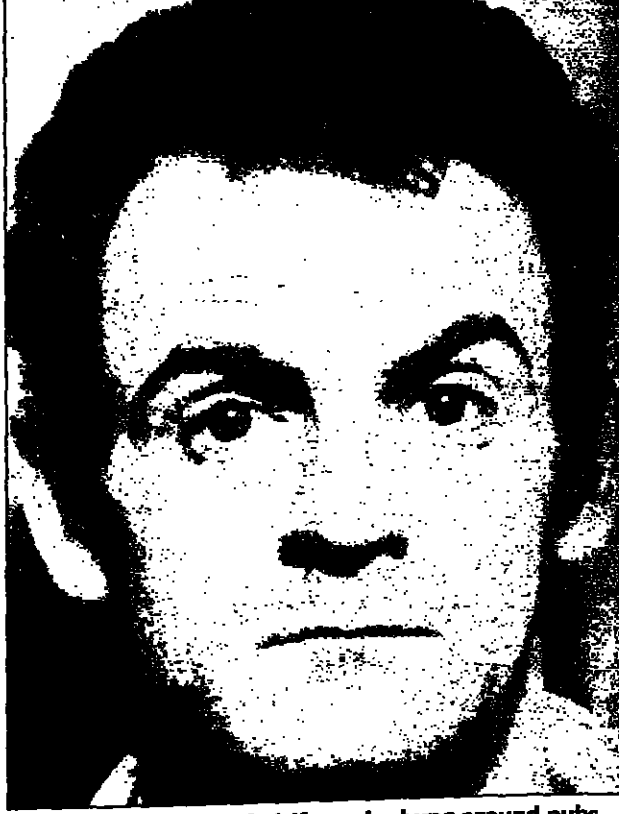
rice Kay said O'Shaughnessy should serve a minimum of 30 years. "There is no crime more horrible than the murder of a child. What you did to Kayleigh Ward was unspeakable," he said. He called the killing "depraved, cruel and cowardly".

From the public gallery, Kayleigh's mother, Yvonne, screamed at O'Shaughnessy: "I hope you rot in hell." Outside the court she said: "Our lives will never be the same now that Kayleigh has gone forever, and with the knowledge of the terrible circumstances around her death."

Alex Carlile QC, for the defence, said that O'Shaughnessy had been "at risk" when very young but had been nothing more than "a drinker and a bit of a nuisance". He was the father of "several" children from other relationships and there was "never an inkling that he was a child-abuser" before Kayleigh was murdered.



Kayleigh Ward: Only nine, but at home with street life



John O'Shaughnessy: A drifter who hung around pubs

## Rape victim's trial ordeal angers judge

A judge called for a change in the law that allows alleged rapists to cross-examine their victims, but support groups fear there are more cases to come. Michael Streeter, Legal Affairs Correspondent, considers the issue.

Judge Timothy Pontius yesterday jailed for 16 years a rapist who had "mercilessly" questioned his two victims in court.

The judge said he was not punishing the rapist for the way he defended himself but added it was "highly regrettable" the law allowed an unrepresented defendant "virtually an unfettered right to personally question his victims in needlessly extended and agonising detail for the obvious purpose of intimidation and humiliation".

Later Victim Support, which works for witnesses and victims of crime, said the Government needed to act "as a matter of urgency" to reduce the agony of witnesses in future cases.

A spokeswoman said: "This will not be the last case - we fear there are others in the pipeline. The danger is that it will discourage other witnesses from coming forward."

In June the Government set up an inter-departmental review on vulnerable witnesses. Its report is due in the New Year and early legislation or a change in regulations is expected.

Ministers are thought to be considering plans which would protect rape victims from cross-examination by their alleged attackers. At present, child witnesses are afforded this protection, and the idea is to extend

this right. Another option is to recommend fresh guidance for judges, giving them powers to prevent cross-examination if they feel a defendant is abusing their right to a fair trial.

At present ministers believe judges are too constrained by fears that by preventing effective cross-examination defendants would have strong grounds for an appeal.

Following the trial of the 44-year-old rapist last month, the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, said he was "appalled" at the women's court ordeal.

Passing sentence at Knightsbridge Crown Court the trial judge said the rapist, who had sacked his lawyers, had made repulsive suggestions to the two victims, whose courage in reporting the crimes then giving evidence he praised.

He said the sentence reflected the fact the defendant posed a serious risk to the public and that the rape offences last year had involved "protracted and repeated sexual violence of a horrifying degree".

The man, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was told that when he is eventually released he will have to register himself with the police under the Sex Offenders Act.

The jury was not told that in the past six years the defendant had been cleared of rape charges on four previous occasions, twice because his alleged victims were apparently too terrified to give evidence.

One of the victims had to give evidence twice after the first jury was discharged following a heated clash with the judge over his behaviour and attitude towards her. She later asked the judge: "Do I have to put up with this? I have never been so humiliated in my life."

## 18 years for animal rights firebomber

An animal rights activist was jailed for a total of 18 years yesterday for waging firebomb terror campaigns against high street stores.

Barry Horne, who blitzed the Isle of Wight in a £3m night of terror, stood impassively as he was sentenced at Bristol Crown Court. But more than two dozen supporters erupted angrily at the sentence and shouted and banged against glass partitions of the public gallery before being removed by police.

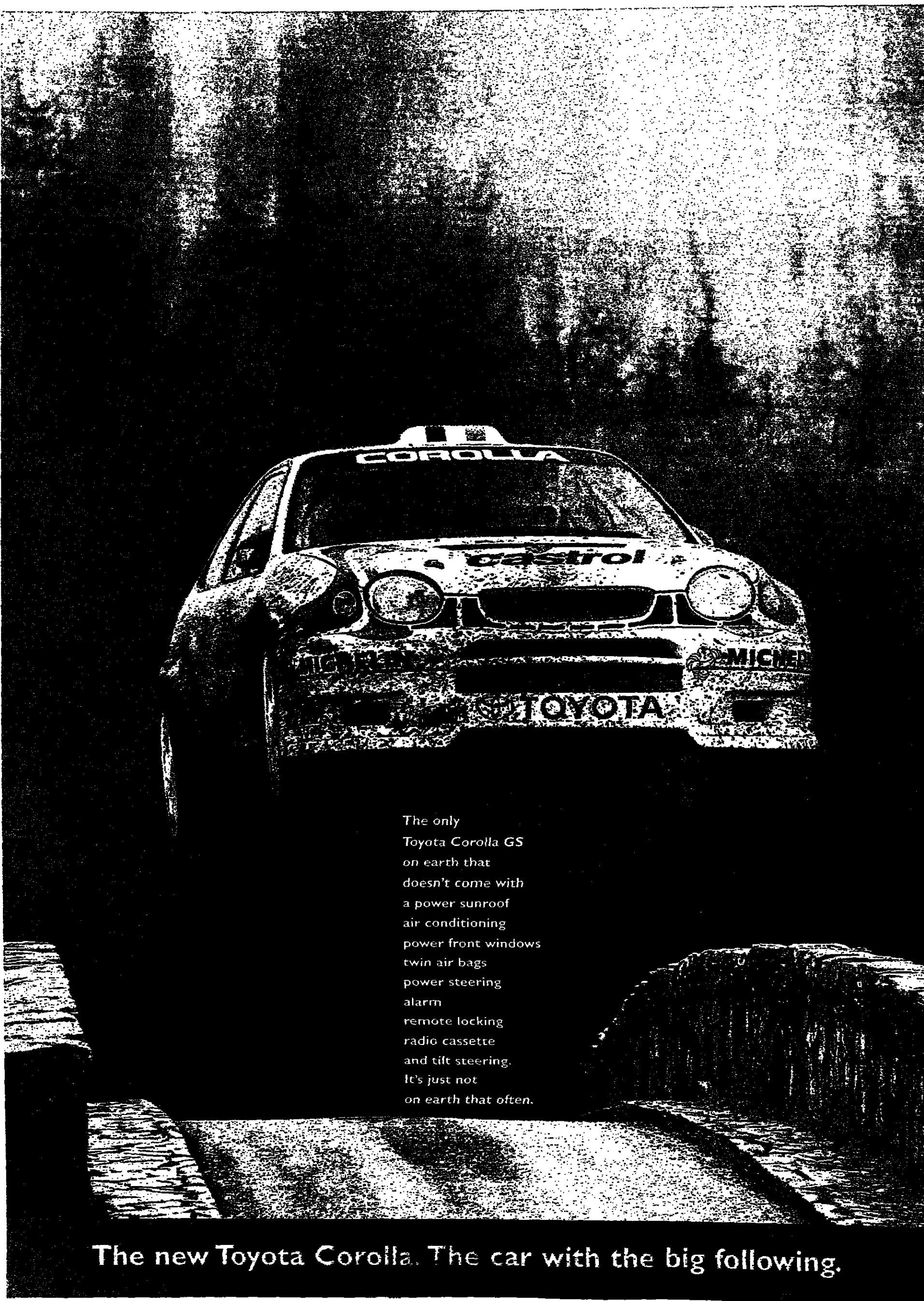
Passing sentence Judge Simon Darwall-Smith told Horne, 45, from Northampton, that pre-sentence reports indicated that he had shown no form of remorse and his intention was to cause the maximum amount of physical and economic damage against his chosen targets. "This was urban terrorism for a particular cause by which you put communities in terror."

The judge said he accepted that he did not intend to attack

human life or limb. Horne, who was convicted last month on 12 counts related to his arson campaigns, smiled briefly and gave a thumbs-up salute to supporters in the public gallery as he was led from the dock.

Police believe that he operated as a lone wolf in his terror campaign, believing that his solo operation was the best strategy to prevent detection.

Following his arrest in summer last year in Bristol's Broadmead shopping centre he has refused to say anything to investigators. He was detained in July 1996 after he had planted firebomb devices in two city centre stores and had moved on to a third. Undercover officers found four more small incendiary devices in his jacket - all timed to go off after midnight - which they made safe. The firebomb devices matched unexploded devices recovered in August 1994 after four arson incidents on the Isle of Wight.



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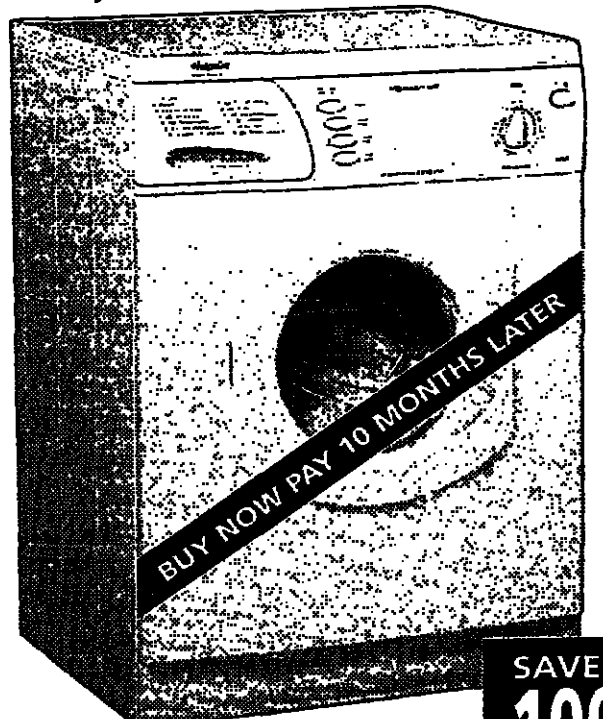
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# When animal rights mean human wrongs

**Animal welfare campaigners in India want to banish performing animals from the streets. Peter Popham in New Delhi says it will be a long time before the country accepts Western standards of animal welfare.**

It was the saddest, shabbiest little political demonstration you could imagine. Yesterday in the business heart of New Delhi, outside the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, several dozen ragged youths sat cross-legged in the road. A few held banners. Maybe half of them were accompanied by the performing animals - monkeys or bears - which enable them to scratch a living of 20 or 30 rupees a day, or around 50p; rather less than £200 a year.

The golden-haired, red-bottomed monkeys, all on chains, foraged for fleas in each other's scalps, or lashed out at enemies with fierce hind legs. One was wearing a purple velvet coat embroidered with sequins. The brown bears, muzzled, or with the ropes through their noses that make them respond to orders, lay face down on the tarmac as if doped, paws covering their eyes.

For once, the boys and bears were not on show. They had gathered to campaign for the right to continue plying their trade. For years, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), chaired by Maneka Gandhi, widow of Sarajay, Indira Gandhi's older son, has been fighting to outlaw the barbaric treatment of animals, of which dancing bears and prancing monkeys are vivid examples. Also on the list is the *mistreatment* of elephants for carnival purposes and the charming of pythons and cobras – all a part of the mesmerisingly archaic Indian cityscape, and

all equally out of tune with modern ideas of animal welfare, let alone animal rights.

The animal boys have their champions, too. The small gathering outside the ban had spun off from a larger demonstration outside the Presidential Palace, demanding the right to save themselves from starvation. It is the latest initiative in a campaign that has been running for 10 years, and claims the support of 100,000 people.

How do they respond to the argument that treating animals like this is intolerably cruel? Dhirendra Pratap, one of the organisers of the demonstration, said: "This is just propaganda put out by westernised environmentalists. So many goats and other animals are killed in the country.

"If they offered some alternative way for the handlers to make a living it would be different, but they don't. Without this work, the boys will starve."

Importing western standards of animal welfare to India is undoubtedly treacherous, because the context is so different. Some places in Delhi are practically impassable to traffic because of the herds of cows that stand about in the roads. Visitors may assume it has always been this way, but locals will tell you it has got much worse since Mrs Gandhi launched her campaign against the slaughter of obstructive cattle by municipal authorities.

So at the Presidential Palace yesterday the boys and beasts were in the midst of what has become a monkey playground: Lutyens's heroic architecture is now a vast climbing frame for wild monkeys. They regularly raid the Ministry of Urban Affairs, tearing up files. The Booker Prize-winning novelist Arundathi Roy lives in the area. While she was finishing *The God of Small Things* she says she dreaded the monkeys coming in through her window and carrying off the manuscript.

## CONGRESS ENDS UNHAPPY ARRANGEMENT

The ungainly structure of India's United Front government, composed of 14 mutually noxious parties and with the Congress Party propping it up from outside like a flying buttress, finally fell apart on Thursday when President Narayanan dissolved the 11th Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament). A general election will be held between the third week of February and the first week of March.

The end came, predictably, when Congress withdrew its support. India's oldest party and the architect of independence had been barred from participation in the ruling coalition by left-wing parties; it had lent its support solely to block the "com-

munalist" Hindu Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP), the largest force in parliament with 161 seats out of 543, from taking power.

But for Congress this was never a happy arrangement. Sitaram Kesri, Congress's 77-year-old leader, dispatched the coalition's first prime minister, H D Deve Gowda, after 11 months. Mr Deve Gowda's successor, Inder Kumar Gujral, once a protégé of Nehru and a successful foreign minister, has managed a mere eight months. Hamstrung by his government's conflicting urges, he has spent much of that time parading his distinguished whiskers around the world's capitals.

— Peter Popham



**Bear necessities:** Those who work as handlers of performing animals say they will starve if welfare campaigners win the debate. Photograph: Mary Ellen Mark. From 'India - A Celebration of Independence', published by Aperture

## Mugabe rethinks farms seizure

The Zimbabwean government will revise a list of 1,503 farms, mainly owned by white commercial farmers, that it had earmarked for seizure in a peasant resettlement programme. The Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation said the list published on 28 November was "full of mistakes and farms that should not have been designated". The decision was reached at a meeting of the central committee of President Robert Mugabe's ruling Zanu-PF party "after several provincial governors made representations that the list did not represent their submissions." — *Reuters, Harare*

## Israel snubs Europe

The Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, said it was committed to peace with the Palestinians but excluded a big role for Europe in the process. Mr Netanyahu, visiting France, met his counterpart, Lionel Jospin, and the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright. He said he told Mr Jospin of a proposal for a period "in which the Palestinians would be able to discharge their obligations, especially in ... security ... to assure us that any territory that is handed over will not become a base for additional terrorism." France has been prominent among nations pressing for a greater role for Europe in moving the peace process forward. — AP Paris

## Basque violence

A politician's bodyguard was shot and a car-bomb exploded in San Sebastian in attacks authorities blamed on the Basque Eta group. The violence erupted as 23 leaders of Herri Batasuna, Eta's political wing, were due to be arrested to begin serving seven-year sentences imposed on Monday for collaborating with the separatist guerrillas. Police said the shooting victim, Jose Maria Lobato, a bodyguard for a San Sebastian city councillor of Spain's ruling Popular Party, was in serious condition.

—Reuters, San Sebastian

## Boris to the rescue

Russia's lower house of parliament approved the 1998 draft budget in its first reading minutes after a dramatic intervention by President Boris Yeltsin. The outcome was thrown into doubt after the biggest parliamentary group, the Communists, said they would vote against. The government views the budget as vital to help craft a recovery in 1998 after years of economic depression in post-Soviet Russia and recent world market turmoil. — Reuters, Moscow

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# 15/WHOSE TRUTH?

## 'Winnie, the arch-manipulator, reduced South Africa's time for healing to little more than a cheap gameshow'

South Africa and the world hoped Desmond Tutu's commission would reach the truth about Winnie Mandela this week. Instead, writes Mary Broid, the archbishop engineered an act of sugary theatre.

least six murders and many serious assaults. It became obvious during the hearings that most of the charges against her would not stand up in a court; the witnesses closest to the violence were simply too flaky, criminal or discredited. But some credible witnesses did emerge, particularly from the families of victims allegedly murdered on Mrs Mandela's orders.

The hearings also produced a largely consistent and extremely ugly picture of Mrs Mandela and her "boys". Few can really still doubt that the Mother of the Nation was by the late 1980s a violent, unpredictable despot, totally unaccountable to her community and the liberation movement.

That alone matters when Mrs Mandela is just two weeks from seeking high office in the ANC, which would be a springboard to the presidency.

For some, of course, race is the only concern. Mrs Mandela must be protected because she is a prominent black leader and surely only racist whites were intended to be called to account by the TRC.

The view is ill conceived.

with Mrs Mandela in mind) to become like those we most despise (the brutal custodians of the apartheid system).

The context in which Mrs Mandela's alleged abuses took place was clearly laid out. Azar Cachalia, one of the few brave ANC figures to unequivocally condemn Mrs Mandela (and for that he can expect to suffer if she does rise to power), said anarchy reigned in Soweto. Thousands of youths, displaced and psychologically disturbed by the civil war, roamed the township, using on each other the torture techniques the state had inflicted on them.

Jerry Richardson, Mrs Mandela's former henchman, now serving life for murdering Stompie, also testified that the boy was tortured using techniques borrowed from the Boers. Violence had bred violence on an horrific scale.

Mrs Mandela showed no understanding of this. She was defiant, unwavering and, despite a vague apology pressed from her by a begging Archbishop Tutu, totally unrepentant. On Thursday she was the same old Winnie: charismatic and strong but without insight or humility. She made a mockery of the Commission by denying everything and leaning on witnesses who later failed to show. A consummate populist, she turned the TRC into a political rally and used smears, racism and sarcasm to swipe at her detractors and accusers.

So why was she fêted like a heroine at the end when the mother of Lolo Sono, in whose murder Mrs Mandela was implicated by credible witnesses, was weeping that there was no justice and Mrs Seipei, having delivered the PR cuddle, was sitting alone and rather lost in the empty hall. The little people were once again used and discarded.

This was no time for cuddles. Small people do matter and so does truth: particularly in a country which lived a filthy lie for so long. As the TRC would usually tell you, there is no short cut to truth or reconciliation.

Mrs Mandela should never have had as much as a sniff of reconciliation when truth was so obviously absent. It reduced the TRC, of which I have been a defender, to a gameshow with Archbishop Tutu as the well-meaning but misguided host.



Gameshow host? Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who halted proceedings when Winnie was on the ropes

Photograph: Anna Zieminski/AFP

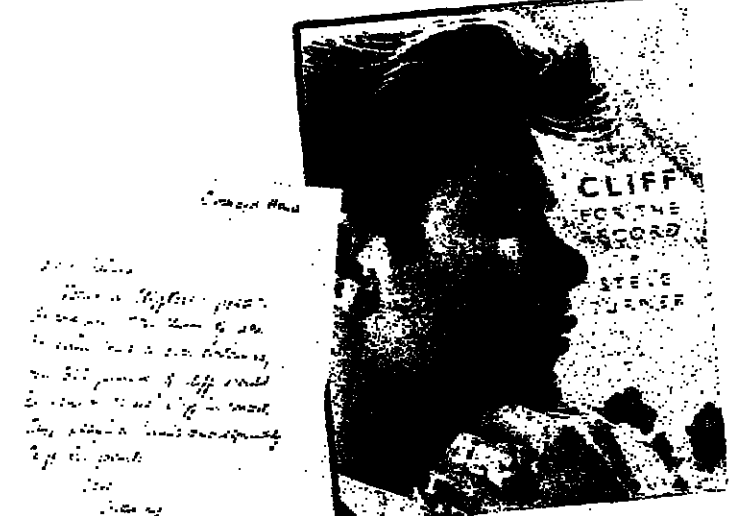
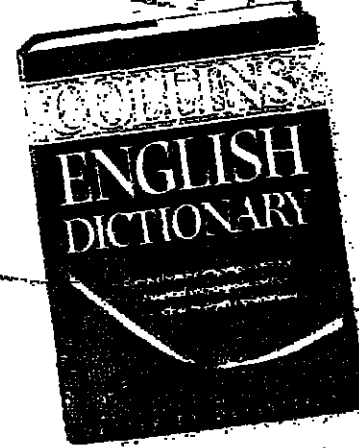
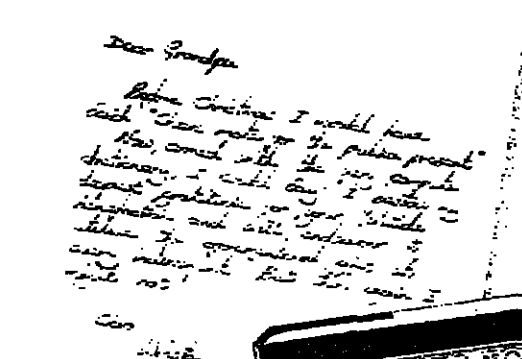
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"Dad" is all he said. Predictable or what?  
Are you sure he's really not a bit of a snob?  
They say he's a real snob.  
Silly smart dog.  
Love  
Lulu



Dear Lulu  
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# 16/DESPATCHES

## Scandal may finally destroy the fearsome reputation of Israel's secret service

**A Mossad agent manufactured false information about Syria for five years, misleading the last three Israeli prime ministers. Patrick Cockburn reports from Jerusalem on the scandal that may finally destroy the reputation of Israel's foreign intelligence service.**

In the summer of 1996 Mossad began to report that Syrian forces were massing in southern Lebanon, preparing to launch a lightning strike on the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. The attack never came. But Israeli fears created a diplomatic furore at the time. Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, persuaded President Clinton to ask Syria for an explanation. Damascus came to believe that Israeli alarm was a

smokescreen to mask its own aggressive intentions. President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt told Yitzhak Mordechai, the Israeli defence minister, on a visit to Cairo: "This week President Assad [of Syria] called me at least five times, and told me that you are about to launch a surprise attack on him." Gen Mordechai was cautious about the Mossad reports, but increased the supply of ammunition and equipment to the army.

It now emerges that a Mossad agent had manufactured the information, as he had been doing since before 1993. Israeli censorship has prevented the media revealing the identity of the agent or why he was considered such a reliable source, but for five years he delivered reports exaggerating the Syrian threat posed to Israel. The news could not have happened at a worse time for Mossad, which means Institute

for Intelligence and Special Tasks. Its reputation, aided by Hollywood and thriller writers, was always exaggerated. But in September it suffered its worst and most public disaster since it was founded in 1951. In the Jordanian capital Amman, two agents were captured when they tried to poison an official of Hamas, the Islamic militant organisation. To get them back Israel had to release Sheikh Yassin, the jailed Hamas leader.

The present affair will damage Mossad's reputation even further. The disinformation was distributed by the agency when it was led by Shabtai Shavit and Uzi Arad, now the diplomatic adviser to Mr Netanyahu. At a time when Israeli military intelligence was saying that Syria had made a strategic decision for peace Mossad was claiming the opposite. What were the motives of the Mossad official in fabricat-

ing the information? Israeli commentators suggest he may have come from the ideological right and wanted to sabotage negotiations with Syria. They add he may also have been acting out of greed, suggesting that he was pocketing money intended for a Syrian agent, or a desire to impress his superiors. The US reportedly wants an explanation from Israel, which has set up its own inquiry into the affair. Politicians and gen-

erals are denying that they took wrong decisions based on the false reports. But there is no doubt that the credibility of the agency has been permanently damaged among Israel's political and security decision-makers. "As far as we are concerned 'the Syrian mess' is much worse than the [Amman] affair," a Mossad source told the daily *Yediot Aharnot*. "It is hard to fathom how such a thing could sprout among us."

## Aborigines' quest for land forces Australia to the polls

**Aboriginal land rights have returned to divide Australia. After the upper house of parliament yesterday rejected a bill limiting Aboriginal rights, Robert Milliken in Sydney says the country faces an election dominated by race.**

John Howard, prime minister of the conservative coalition government, has threatened to have parliament dissolved and to call a general election if he cannot win agreement to legislation which he says would protect outback farmers from Aboriginal land claims. But, after a stormy week of political brinkmanship, the Senate yesterday sank Mr Howard's bill when it struck out key clauses that he says are not negotiable.

The issue has catapulted Aboriginal land rights to the forefront of Australian politics and sparked the country's most fiery debate on race in memory. It has divided city and country against each other and pitched church leaders against politicians. Some churchmen have described the government's proposals as "racist", while government MPs have called on farmers and their families to boycott their local churches.

On Thursday, De-Anne Kelly, an MP in the National Party, the coalition's junior, rural-based partner, claimed that farmers in north Queensland were amassing illegal guns to fight off Aborigines who may lay claims to their land. She described Noel Pearson, a prominent Aboriginal barrister from Cape York, north Queensland, as a

"thug". Mr Pearson says the disputed legislation amounts to "legal apartheid" and has described those who drew it up as "racist scum".

Whether they have intended to or not, Mr Howard and his ministers have managed to portray Aborigines - who comprise 1.5 per cent of the population - as a threat from which the rest of Australia, particularly farmers and miners, must be protected. The prime minister raised the stakes earlier this week when he told government MPs that he had entered a "covenant" with farmers and miners from which he would not walk away. "We don't intend to be morally intimidated," he declared. Last Sunday, Mr Howard made an unprecedented address to the nation on prime-time television appealing to the Senate to pass his legislation unscathed.

The dispute has arisen because of a High Court judgment last December over the legal status of pastoral leases. These leases were first granted late last century to allow white farmers to settle on vast outback holdings covering land the size of small European countries. Aborigines, whose forebears had lived on such lands for centuries, were not consulted and were often taken away and put in white-run reserves.

The concept of native land title itself was established only in 1992, when the High Court overturned the legal fiction that Australia was "empty land" when Europeans settled in 1788. That historic judgment allowed Aborigines to make claims only on unused land owned by the state. But in last December's judgment, on a case brought by the Wik people of north Queensland, the court extended its earlier ruling by saying that native title and pastoral leases could co-exist on the same land. It added, though,

that pastoral rights would always prevail in the event of any conflict.

The ruling has sent rural Australia into a spin, with farmers demanding that Mr Howard legislate to extinguish native title on farming leases altogether. His bill did not go that far, but it did make it hard for Aborigines to make claims to such land by refusing them the right to negotiate and insisting that they would need a physical, rather than a spiritual, or ancestral, connection with the land to qualify.

When the bill reached the Senate a fortnight ago, after passing the House of Representatives, Brian Harradine, an independent senator who holds the balance of power, joined with the Labor opposition, Greens and Democrats, to amend it in ways that would give Aborigines wider power to make claims.

Now that the Senate has made those changes, Mr Howard can submit his original bill to the Senate once again after three months. If the Senate still refuses to pass it intact, he can advise the governor-general to dissolve parliament and call a general election, gambling that he will win and then call a joint sitting of both houses to pass the bill.

But it is a big gamble. The coalition, and Mr Howard personally, have fallen dangerously behind Labor and their leader, Kim Beazley, in opinion polls. Leading newspapers have called on Mr Howard to abandon any idea of an election fought on land rights, which everyone agrees would degenerate into an ugly focus on race and do Australia irreparable damage as it prepares to host the 2000 Olympics. But Mr Howard is stubborn. The further he digs himself in, the less inclined he will be to back down and to jeopardise his leadership.



Land and freedom: The concept of native title in the Australian outback was established in 1992. A further judgment allowed native title to co-exist with pastoral rights  
Photograph: Colorit

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# China: the dirty man of the East with a world to lose

China today produces only a tenth of the pollution that America inflicts on the planet. But by 2015, a rapidly-growing economy may lead to it overtaking the United States as the biggest producer of greenhouse gases.

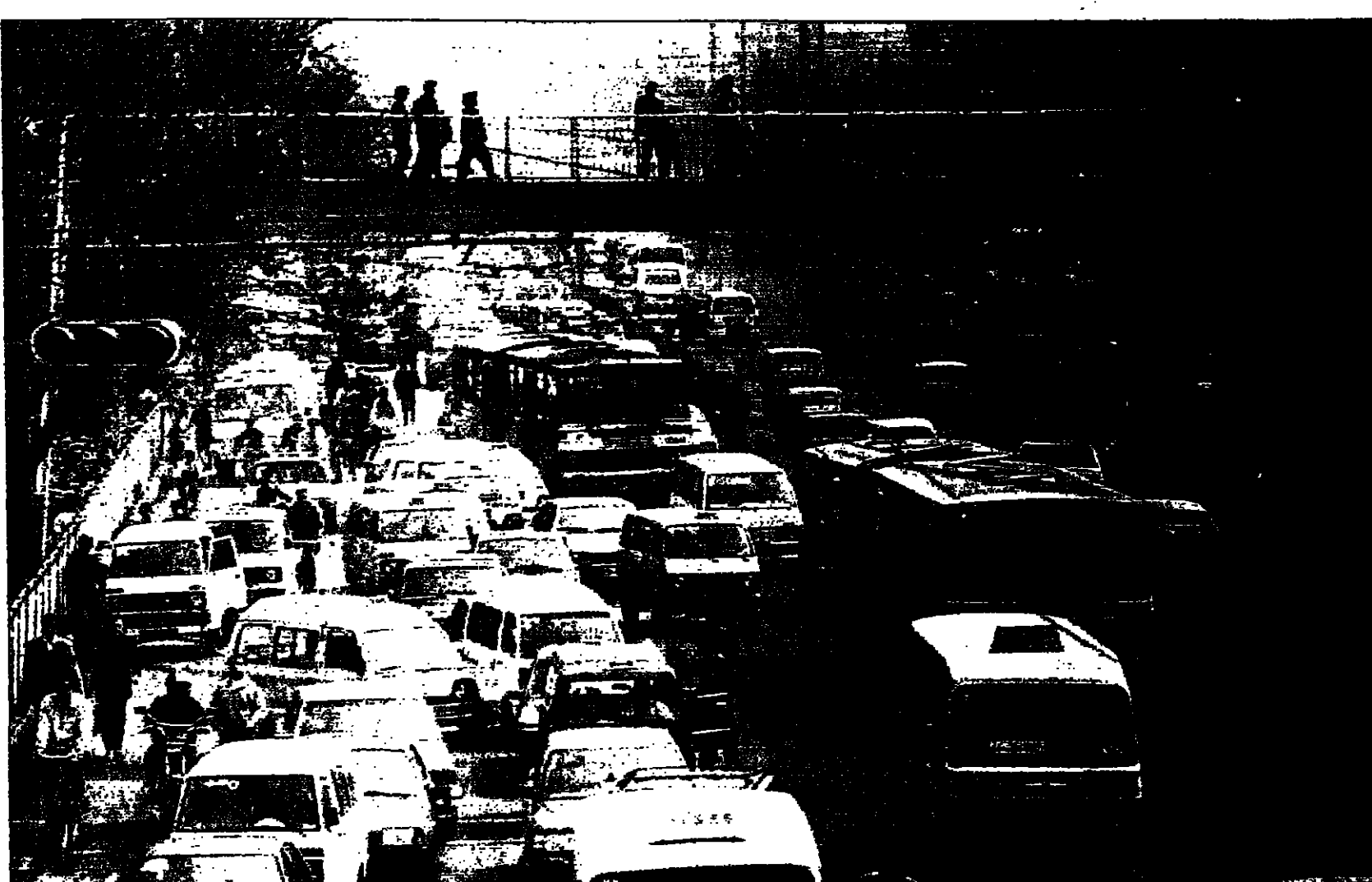
Teresa Poole asks if it is too late to stop China turning into the world's biggest environmental disaster

In Peking, the first sign that winter is approaching is when squadrons of tricycle carts appear on the streets ferrying stacks of coal briquettes which fuel the heating stoves in the city's traditional houses. The second sign is when one washes one's face at the end of the day and the water runs off a dark grey colour. By the time the snow comes, the air is so thick with particles that the flakes act like a welcome air-cleaning system, gathering the coal dust as they fall.

"Today most Chinese cities are covered by blankets of harmful airborne particulates," said a World Bank report on China this year. Two decades of rapid economic growth have hugely improved standards of living, but at considerable cost to the environment. As well as threatening the health of the Chinese, the country's rapidly growing combustion of fossil fuels is a key component in any calculation of how to limit global climate change over the next century. But China is adamant that discussions in Kyoto will not apply to developing countries.

Across China, the main pollution culprit is coal, which provided 78 per cent of primary energy demand in 1995. According to European Commission officials, China admits that coal's contribution will not fall below 70 per cent before 2050.

At the moment, the total carbon dioxide emissions of China are about half that of the US, with the gap narrowing every year. But China rejects this approach to as-



A cloud of pollution hanging in the air over the traffic on a densely-packed road in Peking. Two decades of economic growth have increased standards of living but damaged the environment. Photograph: Rex Features

sessing the situation, pointing out that per capita greenhouse gas emissions now in China are just one-tenth that of the US.

Why, it asks, should a country still struggling adequately to feed and clothe millions of its people be constrained by environmental targets which the Western world did not have to contend with at a similar stage

of economic development? The Europeans have some sympathy with China, unlike the US which is pressing for voluntary commitments in Kyoto.

With China embarking on socially risky reform of state enterprises, the environment is down the agenda. Asia, generally, is not in a position to earmark increased funds

for the environment following the recent economic upheavals. This means that industry will probably continue to find a home in the East.

In 1995, China became the world's largest producer of ozone-depleting substances, after the production of these chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and halons was

banned in many industrial countries. China did commit itself to reducing 1996 consumption of these substances to the 1991 level, but that target was not met. Nor is it clear that China will fulfil plans to ban the use of CFCs in aerosols in 1998.

There is no doubt that China will eventually take global warming seriously, be-

cause it too has a lot to lose. According to Chinese studies, a 1 metre rise in sea levels, combined with storm surges and tides, would displace 67 million people at current population levels.

However, there is a difficulty in trying to focus minds on a problem which will not take effect for a century or more, when little is even being done to address existing horrors.

China is an environmental disaster area, as the following World Bank statistics illustrate:

● Children in Shenyang, Shanghai and other big cities have blood-lead levels averaging 80 per cent higher than levels considered dangerous to mental development.

● The levels of particles and sulphur in China's cities exceeds World Health Organisation and Chinese standards by two to five times.

● The leading cause of death in China is now chronic obstructive pulmonary disease - emphysema and chronic bronchitis - with mortality rates five times that in the US.

● In 1996, less than 7 per cent of municipal wastewater was treated.

● And acid rain affects one-third of China's land area.

"Every now and again you see elements of fear in the Chinese government about the extent of the environmental damage which is done by their industry," said an EU official in town this week. But China wants help from the West - primarily technology - to help clean up the mess, if such a clean-up is to everybody's advantage.

Just as Malaysia maintains that the developed world should help pay to safeguard the remaining tropical rain forests, in the 21st century China may start making the same demands over measures to scale back its greenhouse gases.

## North-South rift threatens to sink climate treaty

Poor countries are furious about the rich world's proposal to limit their rising emissions of pollution. Nicholas Schoon in Kyoto explains why they are so outraged.

The great north-south divide has long threatened to scupper the UN climate treaty negotiations in Japan. With only five days left, the threat loomed larger last night.

That was because of New Zealand's proposal that the treaty should be widened to include most of the developing world as well as the wealthy, industrialised countries.

"It's absolutely unacceptable," said the chief negotiator for the developing world, Mark Nwando, a Tanzanian engineering professor. Argentina's representative appealed to New Zealand: "Please, withdraw this proposal for the good of the conference."

The unfinished treaty, now the subject of late-night wrangling, was never meant to cover the Third World. Two-and-a-half years ago, in Berlin, rich countries agreed that by the time the conference now under way in Kyoto ended they - and they

alone - would have agreed on what cuts to make in their climate-changing emissions over the first decade of the next century. It was called the Berlin Mandate, and it bound only the developed world, because it has produced the vast majority of greenhouse gases to date. These countries still produce more than half the annual total.

But emissions are rising fast in the developing countries and by about 2015 the Third World's combined annual output will equal, and then overtake, that of the developed countries.

Seeing that, and under pressure from a Republican-dominated Congress, the Clinton administration wants to shift the goalposts.

In the run-up to Kyoto the US has been proposing that the big developing countries, especially India and China, must sign up to at least slowing their rapid emission growth.

Australia feels the same way, and now New Zealand has given this demand firm expression with yesterday's written proposal.

It says that at Kyoto the developing countries must promise, by 2002, precisely how much they will slow down the rise in their emissions over the next 12 years up to 2014. Only the very poorest nations, most-

ly in sub-Saharan Africa, would be excluded. The conference host, Japan, said the proposal provided "a good basis for negotiations".

The EU and Britain were more lukewarm, saying that while Third World countries must be brought into the treaty soon, this was not expected at Kyoto. The average Chinese produces one-eighth the global-warming carbon dioxide of the average American, and the average Indian only one-twenty-fifth.

Professor Nwando suggested that if countries such as the US insist on the Third World making undertakings now, the Kyoto negotiations will fail and there would be no global warming treaty.

● "Global health warnings" should be attached to advertisements for oil and petrol, a pension-fund director suggested at the conference yesterday.

They would be similar to the warnings which accompany all advertisements for tobacco: a short government message stating that consumption of fossil fuels was threatening dangerous changes in climate.

"This is a precautionary measure which all governments can readily take," said Tessa Tennant, of NPI Global Care Investment.

## Britain struggles to meet emission cuts as demand for electricity surges

Up to 12 million extra tons of carbon will be emitted into the atmosphere by British households between 1995 and 2000 as they take advantage of cheaper energy, a report for the Government has confirmed.

It says greater consumer choice brought about by privatisation will mean an 11 per cent increase in demand for electricity and a 5 per cent increase in demand for gas.

Extra electricity use will pump between four and 10 million tons into the atmosphere in the five-year period, according to Oxford Economic Research Associates (Oxera), depending on how much of the demand is met by coal-fired power stations.

The increase in demand for gas will add a further million tons of carbon. The government has already admitted in a written parliamentary answer that another million

tons of carbon will be emitted because of the cut in VAT on fuel to 5 per cent.

The report says domestic gas and electricity prices will fall overall by about 22 per cent between 1995 and 2000. Although it was completed in August, ministers only agreed to publish it last week in response to parliamentary questions from the Labour MP Alan Simpson.

In another development which will affect Britain's ability to meet the pledges it makes at Kyoto, it has emerged that the Energy-Saving Trust, which channels money from the Government and the electricity industry into energy-saving schemes, is to have its budget halved.

Staff at the trust are expected to hear this month whether the cut planned by the Conservative government will be implemented.

The trust channels funds to

a wide variety of schemes including cheap, energy-efficient fridges for low-income families and help in buying high-efficiency boilers, insulation and thermostats.

Andrew Warren, director of the Association for the Conservation of Energy, said Britain's commitments to cut pollution would be hard to meet. "If the government believes it is proper to have falling fuel prices for social reasons you have to take counter-cyclical measures."

Angela Eagle, environment minister, said there would be a consultation on energy consumption after Kyoto. "The ... report will be taken into account in the government's consideration of future regulation of the energy industry and of the achievement of energy efficiency climate change targets."

— Fran Abrams, Political Correspondent

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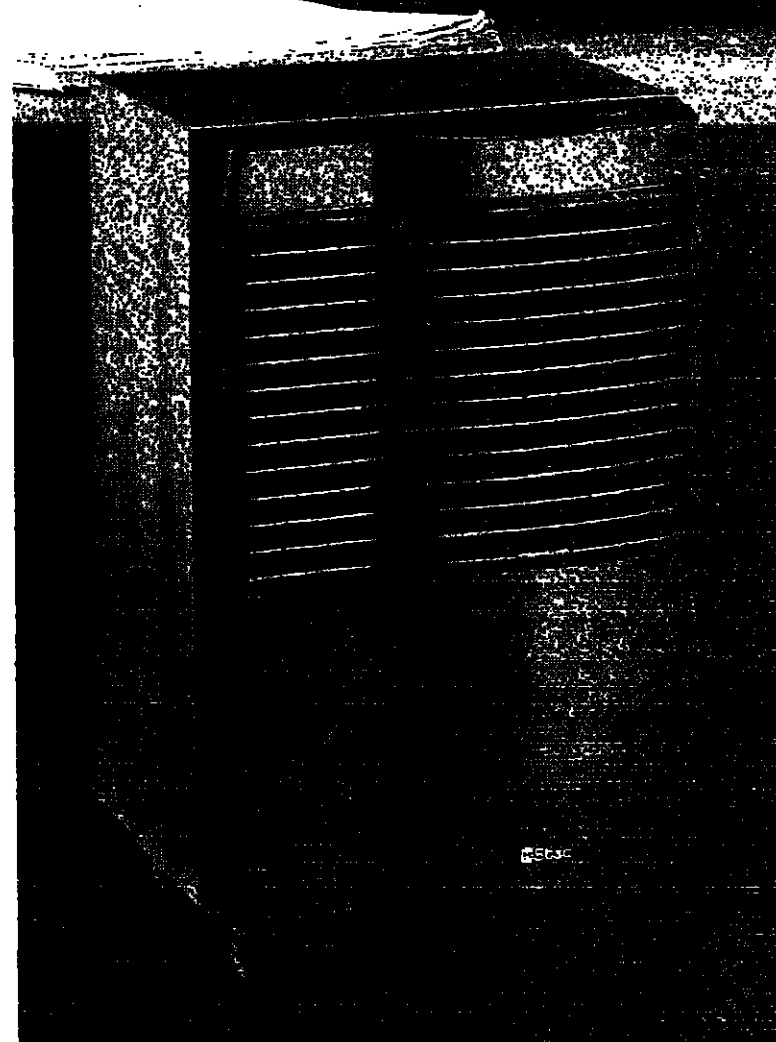
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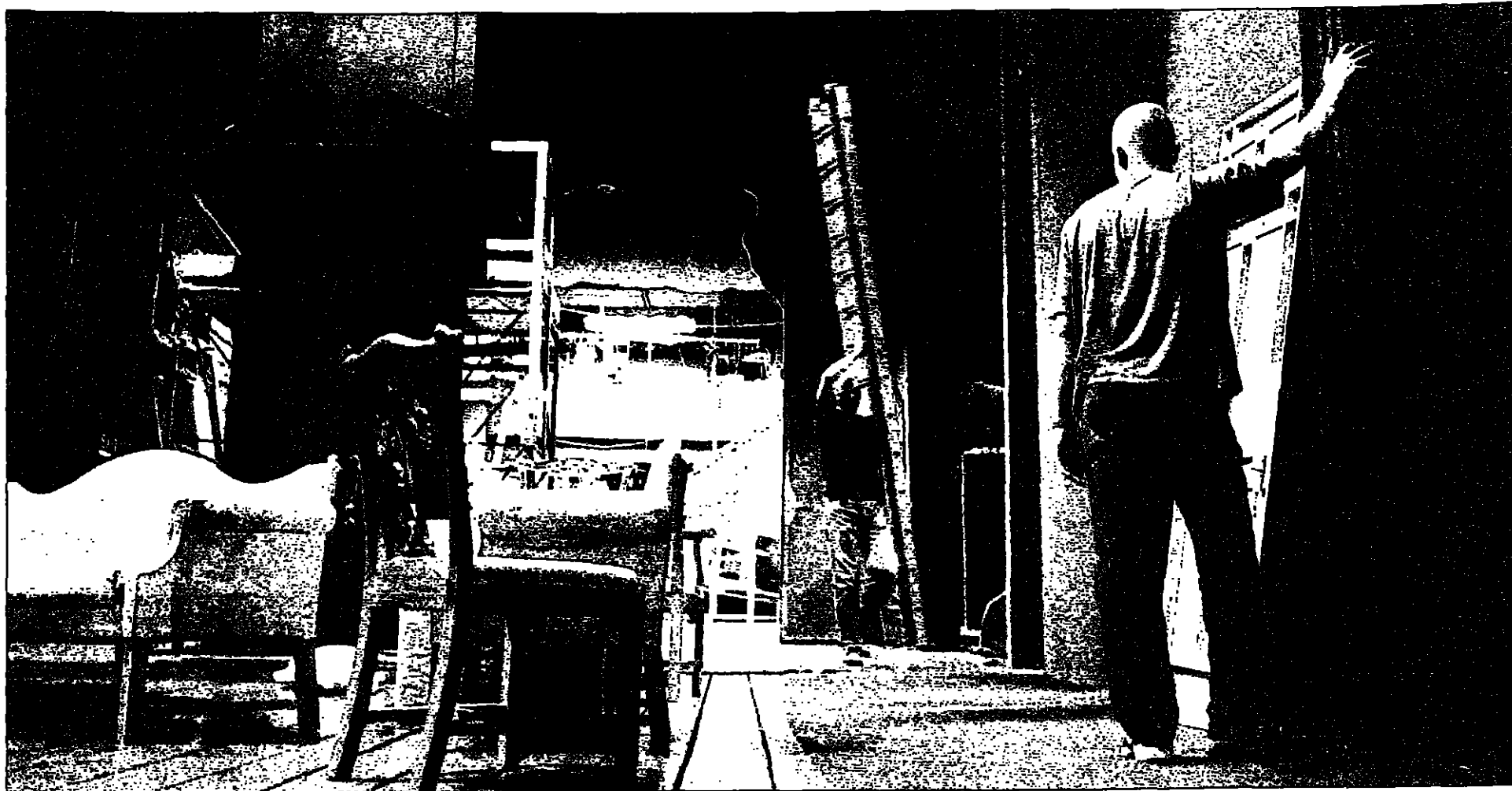
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The end is nigh: stagehands get ready to move in as the Peter Hall Company take their last bow tonight at the Old Vic

Photograph: Rui Xaner

## Exeunt omnes. Farewell then to the Old Vic

Eight months ago Sir Peter Hall, founder of the RSC, former director of the National Theatre, launched his own round-the-clock, seven-day-a-week repertory company at London's historic Old Vic. Now the 'For Sale' signs have gone up and the curtain must fall.

As Hall & Co prepare to give their final performance tonight, Jasper Rees watches from the wings.

As the audience converged on the Old Vic to see *Shining Souls*, a homeless man sat with hand cupped at the foot of the central pillar of the famous old portico. From tomorrow morning, the company which for the last eight months has occupied the building will be able to join him on the pavement. The Peter Hall Company comes to the end of its season tonight and, because the Old Vic has gone on sale, will not be back in February as originally intended. It too has lost the roof over its head.

When darkness falls on the Old Vic it will affect the local economy of Waterloo from beggars upwards. But it isn't quite the end for the Old Vic, and maybe not the end at all. *Slava's Snow Show* moves in for three weeks over Christmas, by which time we may know who has bought the building from its

Canadian owners, Ed and David Mirvish. Most of the bids invited in an informal tender process are apparently from parties with theatrical plans for the place. But not all potential buyers aim to use the building for performance, and would require permission for putting it to alternative use from the local planning authority. It was recently reported in *The Stage* that Alan Whitehead, who runs the Secretis strip chain, would be interested in turning it into a national lap-dancing centre. He must have read somewhere that it used to be the home of Laurence Olivier's National Theatre.

In the meantime, there's a two-pronged sense of loss in the building, stemming from the fact that both the resident company and the building's management are preparing to evacuate. It's very easy to confuse the two, because the identities of both have become so quickly intertwined. People who work for the company speak as fondly of the theatre itself as of Hall's ambitious repertoire. "I can't really explain how brilliant it's been," says wig mistress Sarah Palmer. "I was with the RSC for 11 years before, but this has been more family-oriented. We knew it was special right from the very beginning. The building is very beautiful, and we're all in one place. We have just become closer and closer as the year went on. Everybody is so enthusiastic about working that they're really putting everything into it, working through

their lunch breaks and tea breaks. It's very rare."

Tonight Sir Peter Hall will invite everyone associated with the building up on stage for a final bow. "I'll probably cry a lot," says Palmer. "There won't be a dry eye in the house," agrees Greg Hicks, who, as Edgar in tonight's final performance of *King Lear*, gets to speak the last lines the Peter Hall Company will deliver on this stage. "I will find it very difficult," he says. "I'm privately extremely touched that it happens to be me that's saying it. God knows, I hope it's not the last time that Shakespeare will be spoken on this stage, but from what we understand there's no reason to suppose that won't be the case."

Not everyone in the building is specifically lamenting that departure of the Peter Hall Company. Andrew Leigh has been the Old Vic's general manager since 1979, three years before the Mirvishes purchase the theatre. "It is a wrench but 18 years is an awfully long time to stay anywhere. It's probably good for me that I'm leaving. I think the acute sensation will probably come on 31 January, when I come to lock the door and close it down and switch off the lights and nobody else is here. I and my assistant and the accountant will be the last people to leave."

He will be using the final mouth to dispose of the theatre's archive. "I am determined that whoever acquires the Old Vic should not do what many other theatre owners do, which is just to throw it all away." The papers are destined for the theatre collection in the University of Bristol drama department, where there is a room especially devoted to the Old Vic archive. It is partly financed by the Mirvishes.

Down on the stage door, Matt Harrington is relinquishing his post after a six-year vigil. During the Peter Hall Company's tenure, he says, "it

to grow a career like you grow a pot plant," he says. "You're very rarely in the same place of stable growth, which is what is so brilliant about this company. It was a company that would grow together. Hopefully it will have a continuity. In an ideal world it would be here. Were Peter Hall to come on stage and say, 'On 1 January I start another company', I think there would be a genuine sense of euphoria."

Hicks, like many others in the building, has worked in large companies before, including the National Theatre, "but you have a structural difference here", he says. "Here is this one small, warm building with a lifeblood that goes right back to when it was first built in the 1860s. Without being sentimental, you absolutely feel that in this building you can try anything out and you wouldn't be condemned for doing so. The RSC for actors is a more nervous empire. Sometimes people get lost in the system. This building breeds a sense of security. Plus the fact that there is a genuine sense in this company of everybody getting a good crack of the whip." That includes the stagehands, half a dozen of whom were recruited as extras for *Lear*.

The secret of the relationship between the building and the company lies in their mutual suitability. Each has had something to give the other, and it's unlikely that either will find that with other partners. The impresario Bill Kenwright is looking for a home for the company north of the river. "But it's not going to be so easy in the West End," says Hicks. "Just by virtue of the fact that it's the West End." Meanwhile, there will be a diaspora of talent. Leigh is going to the Shafsbury. Palmer has been offered work at the Globe and the Young Vic. Stagehand Stuart Goodier says: "I may be doing my own one-man show. Stagehand work is filling in for when I can get some acting work."

"Other employers," says Hicks, who is bound for the Glasgow Citizens, "look at people who work in this building, either at the administrative level or the stage management level or in costumes or wigs, and think: if they can make that work, they must be good."

Harrington on the stage door is "going to Chicago", he says. It's unclear whether he's referring to the city or the musical. Both seem light years away from a theatre where darkness, but the brief intervention of *Slava's Snow Show*, is about to fall. As the audience rushes to catch the last show, it's almost as if you can hear the front-of-house announcement on the PA. "Ladies and gentlemen, will you please vacate your seats. The Old Vic closes in one minute."

The final performance of *King Lear* is tonight at 7.30pm. Box office: 0171-928 7616

The last line is from Edgar:  
"The weight of this sad time we must obey,  
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.  
The oldest hath borne most. We that are young  
Shall never see so much, nor live so long."  
Exeunt with a dead march, carrying the bodies

has been three or four times as busy for me. But it's such a family atmosphere, so it's going to feel like the break-up of a family. Friends say, 'why don't you get a proper job?' But they don't understand."

The actor whom Harrington has signed in most regularly this year is Greg Hicks, who has taken on five different roles, including his lank-haired, dribbling Pozzo in *Waiting for Godot*, and was at one point performing no less than nine times a week. "Even now it's difficult

## It's far from over for laddism's nice guy

Lee Hurst  
Wimbledon Theatre

The game's up for New Lads. Critics are whispering. They think it's all over for *They Think It's All Over*.

There was precious little evidence of the decline and fall of the New Laddish empire, however, in the reception accorded to Lee Hurst's stand-up show at the Wimbledon Theatre on Thursday. His every gag was wildly applauded by a very mixed audience which encompassed both grannies and girls.

On *They Think It's All Over*, Hurst's non-stop, over-competitive banter can get on your wick. But on his own with no one else to best, he is much more relaxed, able to run with his more inspired riffs without trampling over other people.

That's not to say that the whole show is as smooth as his trademark pate. Ironically, for instance, his closing routine about *They Think It's All Over* - along the lines of "oh, the laughs we have behind the scenes" - rather dragged. There

ences warm to him as though he were that funny bloke from the pub who's just happened to wander on stage.

He got big whoops of recognition when he declared that "every bloke in this room will agree that buying a kebab on a Saturday night is the final admission that you're not going to pull. Even the kebab-shop owner joins in - 'would you like chilli sauce on your no-sex evening?'"

For a man known as the most laddish thing this side of a stag night, Hurst is also capable of surprising subtlety. He imagined a yuppie on the phone flicking through his Filofax on the phone at the moment the IRA bomb at the Nat West Tower went off: "I've got a window in my diary. No, I really have got a window in my diary."

Whatever label is attached to him - laddish, childish, or just plain daft - Hurst is an undeniably accomplished and amiable stand-up. As an encore he generously ceded the stage to an audience member who came on to propose publicly to his girlfriend. When she



were also sequences blue enough to bring a blush to the cheeks of the stucco angels strumming harps around the proscenium arch.

At other times, the show veered into childish material which chimed rather too readily with the primary-colours set and teddy-bears-and-balloons backdrop left up from the afternoon's *Playdays* stage-show. Did we need to hear about his bout of diarrhoea in quite such detail?

All the same, the majority of Hurst's act affords him the opportunity to show off his best profile as Likable Lee. Audi-

accepted from the front of the circle, Hurst proved his ad lib acumen by calling up to her: "There's a car available if you want to get away. We've got a safe-house ready. Salman's a really nice guy - you'll get on with him."

With that, he went off to the sort of cheers once reserved for World Cup-winning goals scored by another diamond geezer called Hurst.

Lee Hurst plays *Northampton Denzgate* (01604 24811) tonight, and *Plymouth Pavilions* (01752 229922) on Monday.

James Rampton

## A homespun Irish tale with heart

Sive  
Tricycle Theatre, London

Sive, a teenage orphan living with her aunt, uncle and grandmother in the unyielding climate of rural Ireland, is desperate to learn the truth about her parents. "All I know about my mother is that she died when I was a baby." Unbeknown to her, she was conceived out of wedlock and her absent father drowned just days after she was born.

Anyone who saw Martin McDonagh's *The Cripple of Inishmaan* will be experiencing a weird kind of déjà vu. That play pivots around an almost identical set of circumstances. This one also opens with a scene between a cantankerous grandmother and her tough daughter-in-law, thus mirroring McDonagh's first bit, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*.

Before anyone leaps to the conclusion that John B Keane is clambering aboard McDonagh's "Oirish" handwagon, there are two crucial facts to consider. First, Keane is Irish through and through as opposed to Camberwell's McDonagh. Secondly, Sive was written in 1959, before McDonagh was born. This engaging tale is the genuine article.

Then, as now, the key concern for poverty-stricken farmers is money. Mike (doughty Vinnie McCabe) comes home having earned an impressive £16 and 10 shillings. This is put into harsh perspective when he learns from his intractable wife Mena (implacable Marion O'Dwyer) that thanks to the local matchmaker, they could make £200 if they agree to marry off their niece. The grovelling has "grass for 20 cows and fat cattle besides": only trouble is,

he's nearly four times Sive's age. The rest of this everyday story of country folk is taken up with the tussle of their consciences as they try to separate romance from reality.

Keane builds up the cases for and against with a ripe poetic language. "Never, if the sun, moon and stars fall down out of the heavens," is Mike's initially horrified reaction to his wife's fierce urgings. Elsewhere, notably in the contrived structure with its all-too-convenient appearances and absences, the almost homespun tale is, frankly, hokey. But just as you are about to write him off, he builds a scene of high tension around an unread letter sitting centre-stage, its inflammatory contents burning to be read.

That so much of this amusing play works, despite its creakiness, is a tribute to the cast in this Watford Palace Theatre co-production. Director Ben Barnes misses opportunities to investigate and ignite atmospheres between some of the characters, but Simon O'Gorman as the matchmaker fills the stage with energy, beginning with a seemingly benign cunning and building to a captivating, greedy ruthlessness.

Keane knows there are good yarns and much dramatic mileage to be spun out of closed communities. Although he leans towards old-fashioned melodrama, he has one characteristic (in spades) that McDonagh entirely lacks: heart. The final plot twist is affecting rather than merely clever. In stead of soullessly parading his dramatist's skills, his surprise takes you deeper into the world of his characters.

To 17 Jan (0171-328 1000)

David Benedict

## THE WEEK IN THE ARTS

DAVID LISTER

Gillian Wearing is one of the nicer Turner prize winners, chatting affably and openly about her "video art" at the prize dinner last Tuesday until the moment I raised the question of her most famous video - *60 Minutes Silence* - consists of a group of policemen standing motionless for the best part of an hour until the odd one shuffles, another twitches, a third lets rip a cathartic shriek. Were they real policemen. I asked? Ms Wearing became coy and stuttered. We'll take that as a no, then. The Tate press office will neither confirm nor deny that the subjects may not actually be policemen, nor will Ms Wearing's dealer. Why all the evasion over a prize-winning work of art? Could it be the judges comment publicised by the Tate that "her work reveals the often strange or disturbing realities that lie beneath the apparently calm surface of everyday appearances. It also offers a rich insight into the lives of ordinary people." Is it still an insight into contemporary living if the people are acting a role?

Definitely, says Virginia Button, Turner Prize historian and assistant keeper in the Modern Collection at the Tate. "The insights still hold good." That has to be taking art criticism on to another planet.

Some of the talk at the Turner Prize dinner was that two artists had turned down invitations to



be on the shortlist. Julian Opie, who has an installation at Heathrow Airport, was one. Perhaps the reason artists give up the chance of £20,000 and national glory is fear of having their work analysed by contemporary art experts.

Some slogans adopted by the campaign for free admissions to museums could do with a bit of spin doctoring. BECTU has put out a leaflet with a plea by artist

Anthony Gormley: "I feel passionately that museums should be free - the only way both art and life can meaningfully interact without let or hindrance. It is not a commercial relationship. One should go to museums as often as one goes to the supermarket, to recharge your imagination." Not the greatest analogy. Man and supermarket do have a commercial relationship. You pay to sample the wares.

Meanwhile, different attitudes are evident north of the border. I visited the Museum of Scotland currently being built in Edinburgh to show Scotland's history. The museum opens in a year's time and the views from the top over Edinburgh and the surrounding countryside are spectacular. The different attitudes to museum charges come in the appeal to raise money for the building. Some donors have said they will only give money if charges are imposed. At least one of these is a well-known celebrity. I am not allowed to divulge his name. Even though I've started, I cannot finish...

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## THE WEEK ON RADIO

ROBERT HANKS

### Too 'Disney' to be life-affirming

When humour doesn't come off, we abuse it in purely negative terms - it's unfunny, is all. When pathos fails to move us, we have a whole battery of words to train on it: not just sentimental but mawkish, maudlin, schmaltzy, soppy, sloppy, slushy.

All of which apply to *To the Wedding*, last week's Sunday Play on Radio 3. I was looking forward to this. For one thing, it is based on a novel by John Berger, who also helped with the job of dramatising it, and his feature *Will It Be a Likeness?* - a playful, buttonholing sequence of paradox and speculation on modern values - was one of the highlights of last year. For another thing, it was produced by Theatre de Complicite, one of our most exciting and original theatre companies, and you'd expect them to have some fresh ideas about radio drama.

Not so, unfortunately. Although much of the play was recorded on location around Europe - the characters are converging from various points on the wedding of Gino and his HIV-positive bride, Ninon - this only paid off at one or two points in terms of life-like sound

or acoustic variety. In fact, the production observed quite rigidly the traditional patterns of radio drama - dialogue placed firmly in the foreground, narrative voiceover done with a close-up microphone.

But you doubt that a more lively acoustic could have convinced you that this cast of characters, with their simple dignity, earthy wisdom and pure, sensual enthusiasms (food, sex, dancing), twitching to the tune of Berger's simplistic Arcadian politics - he wants to celebrate the persistence of family, and love, and peasant joys in the jaws of modern capitalism. And much of Berger's language is wooden and mock-profound - like Ninon's lament, when she learns that she has the virus, that she faces "later solitude for ever and ever" (not exactly a great advert for safe sex, given that the play was broadcast to mark World Aids Day).

It all ended with Gino and Ninon dancing on the sand near the mouth of the Po ("We don't need music," she tells him). The intention, clearly, was to be life-affirming: but if life can

صلى الله عليه وسلم



# Ever heard the Algerian national anthem? Why Nike wanted you to, and how the stunt failed

BY PAUL VALLELY

It was the Consumer's Revenge. Or the PR man's Nightmare. The Olympic champion, Quincy Watts, was into the back straight of the 400 metres and the gold looked in the bag when suddenly the sole of his Nike shoe parted from its upper. Watts staggered across the finishing line in fourth place. It was a spectacular and humiliating public relations disaster. For the athlete was at that point the focus of a television commercial for super-cushioned Air Max shoes made by Nike. Watts took his shoes and very publicly dumped them in a rubbish bin.

That was at the World Championships at Stuttgart in 1995, but they are still gloating at Adidas, Nike's chief rival, where the year after staff punched the air in triumph when their man Donovan Bailey, in the space of just 9.84 seconds, became the Fastest Man in the World wearing Adidas shoes.

Not that Nike did not get its revenge. At the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta 12 firms paid £28m each to be named official sponsors. Adidas was one of them. Nike was not. But it stole the thunder by buying up every prominent billboard in town and plastering them with hard-hitting Nike ads which stole all the media attention. It also built its own Olympic village and then paid huge sums to all the top stars to appear there. It was so successful that in the run-up to the recent Olympic bid the games' governing body insisted that every bidding city had to buy up all its poster sites for a six-week period covering the games to prevent a repeat.

So Nike have turned their attention to football and the World Cup in France. There, Adidas have paid to set up an official "village" beneath the Eiffel Tower. Nike have been out-maneuvred by the authorities so that they are able to locate their village only on the outskirts of the French capital. In response Nike have set the marketing industry abuzz with reports that the firm is to spend £20m on stunts to upstage Adidas again. Adidas are threatening "counter-stunts".

It's what the industry calls "guerilla marketing". It is aggressive and impetuous, according to Roger Baird of *Marketing Week*, who has spent the past month unsuccessfully trying to find out what the stunts might be. Of course, there may be none. Hype is an integral part of the conflict which for all its "guerilla" tag is taking on the characteristics of a full-scale set-piece big battle which makes the ancient conflict between Coke and Pepsi seem tame.

Indeed Nike has recently beaten Coca-Cola. Virgin and other pushy contenders in the UK advertising, marketing and PR industries list of Top 20 "super-brands". Sportswear is now the big league. Almost half the shoes sold in the United States now are trainers.

More than that, sportswear is serious fashion. Not that it has that much to do with sport. Everyone from President Bill Clinton to Liam Gallagher of Oasis wears Adidas (for contrast. Blur's Damon Albarn wears Nike). Only about a fifth of the gear that Adidas sells is actually worn for sport. "Eighty per cent of our products are used for leisure," said an Adidas spokesman. "Sport has become the pop of the Nineties. Sportswear sales have gone at a phenomenal rate in the past five years."

The ultimate endorsement is that of the criminal classes: the most

popular training shoe among burglars is the Nike Air Max, according to one police survey. Nike has begun to open Nike-only stores, styled in the portentous manner of a cultic temple from the period of the Antiquities rather than a mere shoe-shop.

Image is everything. It may only be Nike's technical experts who have its trademark tick – which Nike-men call the "swoosh" – tattooed on their thighs, but it is not uncommon to see street-smart kids with it shaved into their stubbled hair.

But image costs. Between 1987 and 1990, the average price of a training shoe in Britain doubled from £24.99 to £49.99, and today, prices of between £99 and £200 are common. Football shirts, running pants and sweatshirts

**'Eighty per cent of Adidas products are for leisure. Sport has become the pop of the Nineties'**

are all similarly inflated. Retail prices are often 600 per cent of what it actually costs to produce the goods.

It is not hard to see where a lot of that margin goes. Nike pays out huge sums to major sporting superstars such as Tiger Woods, Pete Sampras and Eric Cantona. Michael Jordan, the legendary point guard for the Chicago Bulls basketball team, is reputed to earn \$10m a year from his Nike deal. Andre Agassi, who wore a Nike baseball cap throughout his Wimbledon triumph, is paid about \$2m a year. They do their best to earn the money. Michael Johnson wore gold trainers with a massive Nike tick when he won his Olympic gold medals in the 200 metres and 400 metres. Shane Warne, the Australian bowler, wears a Nike ear-ring.

It is all along way from the small shop lit only by a paraffin lamp in which in the 1920s Adi Dassler and his brother Rudolf, two sports-mad cobblers, began in Herzogenaurach, not far from Nuremberg, to make shoes for track and field athletes and footballers. In 1936, the black athlete Jesse Owens disproved Hitler's Aryan theories at the Berlin Olympics when he won four Olympic gold medals wearing their shoes. The distinctive Adidas brand mark of three white stripes was developed in those days as a way of bolstering the shoes' sides.

More than 30 years later, Bill Bowerman, a track coach at the University of Oregon, and Phil Knight, a college runner, founded a similar business in America. The name Nike – the Greek goddess of victory – came to one of Knight's partners in a dream. A local graphic designer was paid \$35 to come up with the Nike "swoosh".

Today both have moved beyond running shoes into a whole range of sportswear. Nike now spends £5.6bn on marketing alone and commands about 35 per cent of the massive global market. Adidas trails behind with £2bn, but it has recovered from the losses incurred earlier this decade when it was owned by the disgraced French politician Bernard Tapie, who

bought it from Dassler's widow. Under the chairmanship of Saatchi's former chairman Robert Louis Dreyfus, it has almost totally revamped its product range, adopted a more aggressive marketing strategy and overtaken the industry's third big player, Reebok, which was the market leader in the 1980s but which now spends a mere \$400m a year on sponsorship. Behind the big three is a pack of smaller companies such as Pony, Puma and Mizuno, and Britain's Umbro, which has stitched up the English football kit scene.

Until recently football remained outside the Nike sphere of influence. But the company's strategists have recently decided that this is the great hole in the sportswear market. First they signed an eight-year sponsorship deal with the US Soccer Federation worth £74m – a small investment, its analysts reckon, against the time when football takes off in America. Then, earlier this year, Nike signed the biggest sponsorship deal in the history of marketing – a £200m package with the Brazilian national football squad. To that they have added the national squads of Italy, Holland, Nigeria and Korea. They have also bought up a series of individual players, including a £10m contract with the Liverpool striker Robbie Fowler. They are ready to challenge Adidas, which has done deals with Germany, France, Spain, Argentina, Yugoslavia, Romania, Sweden, Hungary, Morocco and China.

But at a cost. It is not just that clashes occur when a player is sponsored by one firm and his team by another. They try to keep that quiet, although news of it leaked when Nike objected to the fact that almost half of the England rugby team appeared in a variety of footwear against Canada at Twickenham recently. Nike was annoyed to discover that the ace goal-kicker Rob Andrew preferred boots made by Mizuno. They insisted that he blacked out the tell-tale white marks in future.

Nobody who knows Nike was surprised. "They are brash and arrogant, but they are in such a strong market position that you ignore them at your peril," said one insider. Indeed. But their brashness can cause them problems. During the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, they had the magisterial pole-vaulter Sergi Buteka at the centre of their ad campaign. "Spanish air traffic control has been informed," said the ad. It was embarrassing, therefore, when Buteka "no-heighted". Then there was the great 1500 metres hope, the Algerian Noureddine Morceli, another Nike athlete. "Ever heard the Algerian national anthem? You will," said the Nike ad. And everyone did – but only when another Algerian, Hassiba Boulmerka, won one of the women's races – wearing someone else's shoes. Poor old Morceli was thrashed. Another Nike great white hope, Daniel O'Brien, didn't even get through the US trials.

The schadenfreude was not just Nike's, of course. In a world of rash claims, the 100 metres world record-holder, the American Leroy Burrell, was spon-

sored by Mizuno to race in "wonder shoes that will smash the world record". He lost to Carl Lewis, who everyone had written off as past his prime.

But it was not just the reckless predictions which made Nike ads controversial. There was something about their aggressive tone. "It got them a lot of coverage in Atlanta," recalls Roger Baird. "They had ads with athletes throwing up as a sign of how grueling the games were."

In Chicago, at a time when more than 100 youths had been killed for their trainers in the previous couple of years, a Nike commercial with the catchline "Get Some" was taken off the air after being said to glamorise gang warfare. A black civil rights group led by Jesse Jackson urged a boycott of Nike products for a time. But the row did nothing to depress Nike's general sales. Nor, apparently, did the controversy when US Muslims protested about a new Nike logo intended to look like flames on a line of basketball shoes with names like "Air Bakin'" and "Air B-Que" – unfortunately the flames resembled the word "Allah" written in Arabic script. After a threat to urge Muslims around the world to boycott Nike products, the firm withdrew the line and donated \$50,000 for a playground to an Islamic elementary school in the United States.

Then there was the "good-vs-evil" ad, in which a team captained by Eric Cantona saw off a team of cyberspace and ended the match by booting the ball right through the stomach of one monster. It was banned from Danish cinemas and criticised by the football authorities, Fifa and the International Olympic Committee.

But the most serious controversy, and one which is still growing in the United States, is over the low pay and appalling conditions of sport-shoe makers in Thailand and the Philippines. A report by Christian Aid showed that a woman worker producing Nike trainers in China would have to work nine hours a day, six days a week for 15 centuries, on current wages, to match the £929,113 salary of Nike's head, Phil Knight. One factory in Vietnam was reported to have made 61 women run two laps around a plant to discipline them for failing to meet production quotas and for wearing improper footwear.

President Clinton, in an attempt to reverse months of disastrous publicity generated by the reports of ill-treatment of factory workers around the

**Nike was annoyed that England's Rob Andrew preferred a rival. They insisted that he black out the tell-tale white marks**

world, got Nike and other companies to sign an unprecedented agreement, a code of conduct on employment practices around the globe. Nike and the others would undertake to honour a 60-hour maximum working week – with overtime not to be forced – and to respect the minimum wage laws of the countries in which plants are located. They also undertook not to employ workers under the age of 14. In return, companies abiding by the code will be able to sew "No Sweat" labels into their products to reassure shoppers that in spending their money they are not indirectly supporting slave labour.

It may not be enough. "They've agreed a code of conduct but they haven't agreed on how to monitor it," says Bethan Brooks, a researcher for Christian Aid. "They want to monitor it themselves or get their auditors to do it. We think that's not independent enough."

Nor do many US consumers. Recent reports are that two of Nike's top American football stars are considering terminating their sponsorship contracts, so disquieted are they.

The market for training shoes has in any case taken a downturn in the United States. Shares in Nike have fallen heavily in the US this summer. American kids are turning their backs on trainers in favour of more rugged footwear. Whether the cause is concern over ethics or mere changes in teenage fashion, one

thing is clear: the European and world-wide soccer market becomes increasingly important to Nike and its rivals.

Nike has begun to take soccer very seriously. Europe's footballers are now finding that the money to be made from sponsorship can far outstrip their earnings from sport. Paolo Maldini, the Italian footballer, made more last summer from a Nike poster campaign than from playing in *Euro 96*. (Other soccer stars featured in the campaign, including Eric Cantona, picked up large amounts of money without even kicking a ball in the tournament.)

Already an direct impact on the sport is discernible. In the summer Nike acted as a broker in football's biggest-ever transfer – the £18m deal of Brazilian star Ronaldo, whom Nike sponsors, from Spain's Barcelona to Inter Milan of Italy. At first, insiders say, the company advised him against the transfer. At one stage, to protect its investment in the Brazilian star, Nike considered buying out his contract and lending him out to its sponsored football clubs around the world. Eventually a deal was done, but it was the first one in which a sponsor has interfered with football's decision-making process.

To Nike and Adidas there is nothing new in the idea. Earlier this year they organised two artificial events which have no bearing upon the formats of the athletics events were rooted in. They created artificial distances. Donovan Bailey vs Michael Johnson was billed as the Olympic 100m champ vs the Olympic 200m champ and as Canada vs USA. But in reality the \$150m showdown at Toronto's SkyDome was Adidas vs Nike. Johnson, the American sprinter who won gold medals for both 200m and 400m at last summer's Olympic Games, had signed a six-year \$12m endorsement deal with Nike. Bailey was already in the Adidas stable. The hype before the event was formidable but the race itself was a flop, with Johnson pulling up short with an injured leg halfway through. He was ignominiously taken off the course in a golf-cart.

The day before, in Holland, Adidas had put up a \$1m prize for a world two-mile record. The protagonists were Noureddine Morceli of Algeria and Ethiopia's Haile Gebrselassie – two of Adidas's leading clients. The winner would get the \$1m if he went under the eight-minute mark. They failed. But non-Adidas athletes were not invited, so the impressive Kenyan runner, Daniel Komen, who may well have beaten them both, was excluded. By coincidence, Komen happens to run for Nike.

Will we see such manipulation in football now? Nike have recently signed the Scottish champions, Rangers. "Nine out of ten: must do better," says the ad slogan it has ostentatiously posted outside Celtic's ground – Celtic set the record of nine league titles in a row, which Rangers has now equalled and hopes to beat. It is typical Nike. But what practical consequences, insiders are beginning to wonder, may follow when the Nike-men start pulling the strings?

Nike hopes to acquire an investment in the England team now. England is in the process of negotiating a new kit deal. All the big global companies, including Adidas, have tendered to supply the national team's kit, which is currently provided by Umbro. Nike are the favourites to replace them. Not everyone will feel easy at the prospect.



# 20/LEADER & LETTERS

## All the world's a pitch; the fixture is a friendly



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Once the British knew of faraway places and distant cultures by trading with them, invading them, christianising them and colonising them. Now we play football with them. On the whole, football is the better way. The popular stereotypes of imperialism and war – of noble savages, backward races, cannibals, pygmies, nabobs, of heartless hums and inscrutable Japanese – are giving way to an equality of respect and a better understanding of the world. Football is the most powerful agent of modern internationalism.

This week's World Cup draw was one vast, popular geography lesson. Who knew or cared that Colombia had been turned into a land of refugees, its government powerless to stop right-wing paramilitaries wreaking revenge on Marxist guerrilla sympathisers, until England drew it in Group G on Thursday night? After all, the only reason most people could tell it apart from a space shuttle before Thursday, or know which continent it is in, was because Faustino Asprilla plays for Newcastle United.

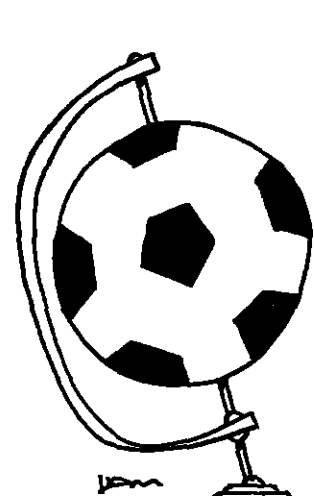
The Scots, meanwhile, might feel that they know too much already about Brazil and Norway, a tribute to the educative power of global sporting prowess.

Who, though, could have expected the staid *International Herald Tribune* to print

the entire draw on its front page under the headline, "Cup draw pairs US and Iran"? The idea of a nation peopled entirely by fundamentalist mullahs and women in deep purdah taking to the turf in studded boots, shorts and shirts covered in advertising logos is enough to give the popular imagination pause. As the *Trib* rather drily commented, "it is hard to imagine two countries with less love for each other than the United States and Iran" (except possibly Iran's neighbour Iraq). Perhaps the shared experience of the off-side rule will bring greater mutual understanding.

Football has already started to dissolve the myth of Iran as a drear theocracy, as Robert Fisk reported in our pages earlier this week. Sure, Allah was given the credit for the two goals in seven minutes in Melbourne which secured Iran's place in the finals, but the nation – even some of its women – rejoiced in distinctly secular fashion when the victorious team was helicoptered in to Tehran's football stadium from the airport.

Football is the only true secular religion, providing a common culture for the world in the way Christendom and Latin once did for Europe. And Britain's integration into the global church – which it founded but has always seemed in danger



of being left behind by – has been cemented in the past two years.

Since the Bosman ruling in 1995 which freed up the transfer market, and the injection into football of Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB millions, the number of foreign players in Premiership clubs has now hit 150. The running commentary of any top game is today a specialist task for qualified linguists. Led by Norwegians, threat-

ening to repeat their Viking depredations on Scotland's World Cup hopes, and Australians, British football has become a global market.

Last weekend saw a vivid demonstration of this when Celtic and Dundee fielded 28 players, including substitutes, for the Scottish Coca Cola Cup, 14 of whom were foreigners.

Travel broadens the mind, even if most of the travelling is done by international football stars while the minds of lumpy supporters stay glued to the television. But the mind of the average football supporter, once a haven for basest racial prejudice and anti-foreigner sentiment, is now programmed to display adulation not just for the many black players in the game but to pronounce Karl-Heinz Riedle, the Liverpool striker.

As was reported this week, the proportion of black players far exceeds that in the population as a whole, as in American football, a great cultural engine of racial equality in the States. The black superstars here, such as Wright, Ince and Cole, are heroes for black and white alike.

Meanwhile foreigners are not merely respected but, as Cantona was, elevated to prophet status in the new religion. He has been followed by Zola (Chelsea, Italian), Bergkamp (Arsenal, Dutch) and

Schmeichel (Manchester United, Danish).

Nor is this simply a market in players: several leading British teams are now managed by foreigners: the Dutch Ruud Gullit at Chelsea, the Swiss Christian Gross at Tottenham and the French Arsène Wenger at Arsenal, for example.

The World Cup has always been an interesting exercise in national identity for the United Kingdom, with team loyalties falling to match nation-state boundaries. The interest generated by Thursday's draw stands in stark contrast to yesterday's piece of internationalist symbolism at Waterloo station, where Robin Cook unveiled the logo for Britain's presidency of the European Union (although it is worth noting in passing the lack of English nationalist outrage at the way in which the EU is acting as a single country in the Kyoto climate talks in Japan).

As the World Cup progresses, the cause of internationalism is advanced. We will become interested in the history, geography and society of Cameroon (Group B), Paraguay (D), South Korea (E), Jamaica and Croatia (H). With the end of the Cold War, and the receding of the threat of a hot war of mass destruction, football is now the strongest incentive to find out about the rest of the world and seek to understand it.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Welfare for women

Sir: It is nonsense to suggest that the Government wants to revert to a regime where women are treated as virtual chattels of their husbands, or to embark on a massive transfer of resources from women to men ("Women lose up to £10bn under Labour", 1 December).

The Government is committed to modernising the tax and benefit system so that it boosts family income through work. We believe this is the best way to relieve poverty and strengthen family and community life, from which women as well as men will gain.

Diane Coyle writes that "In three-fifths of eligible families that [the main earner] is the man". In fact, the mother is the sole or main wage earner in three-fifths of families in receipt of Family Credit. So it is likely that the majority of those receiving the tax credit, paid through the pay packet, would be women.

There are a number of options under consideration for the form of the Working Family Tax Credit, including the use of a family income test. This is not the same as ending independent taxation. Such a test already applies to Family Credit, where, for a couple, both partners' income is written on the same claim form.

As Gordon Brown made clear last week, the Working Family Tax Credit provides the opportunity for helping working mothers by improving further the support given to low income families for child care. On the same day, he announced enough funds to set up an out-of-school childcare club in every community. This is good news for working mothers and their families. HELEN LIDDELL MP (Airdrie and Shotts, Lab) London SW1  
The writer is Economic Secretary to the Treasury

Sir: Whilst reading Patricia Holt's informative new biography of Jennie Lee I was struck by some remarkable similarities with the current focus over Harriet Harman's attack on the benefits of lone parents, the vast majority of them women. In 1931 the Labour government faced a mounting bill for benefits, caused by rising unemployment. Chancellor Philip Snowden insisted on financial orthodoxy and so the government decided to cut benefits to married women. The measure was defended in the Commons by Margaret Bondfield, a Cabinet minister who had built her career in the Labour Party through the women's trade union movement.

The proposal was bitterly attacked in the House by Jennie Lee and other women Labour MPs such as Eleanor Rathbone, Ellen Wilkinson and Cynthia Mosley. Not a single woman joined Margaret Bondfield in the lobby but the measure was voted through by the massed ranks of Labour backbenchers whom Jennie Lee later described as reacting on every occasion "like a load of wet cement. They would see nothing, do nothing, listen to

nothing that had not first been given the seal of [Ramsay] MacDonald's approval".

Then there was just a handful of women Labour MPs, whereas now there are a hundred. I wonder how they will fare when put to a test of principle compared with their predecessors of sixty years ago. MICHAEL HERBERT Mossley, Lancashire

Sir: The Government should do its homework. Research commissioned by the previous Conservative government, and conducted by the Policy Studies Institute, has tracked 900 lone parents since 1991 and interviewed 3,600 others. What emerges from this work is that while only one in eight women with babies work, 40 to 45 per cent of mothers of 15 and 16-year-olds, and three out of four lone mothers with children who are 16-plus, have jobs. Workshy, or putting the emotional needs of the child first?

Social exclusion can be tackled – but not by name-calling and a reliance on simplistic solutions to highly complex problems. And certainly not by docking £11.50 from lone parents – why punish the many who are trying so very hard and why further restrict the lives of some of our very poorest children? YVONNE ROBERTS London SW12

### Museum charges

Sir: You are right that the key issue for museums is access, but it is nonsense to claim that new museum buildings are some sort of extravagance (report, 1 December). The reality is that museums and galleries have been starved of both capital and revenue funding for decades. New and refurbished buildings are desperately needed precisely to preserve and provide full and proper access by the public to their existing collections.

Both the backlog of outstanding work and the opportunities for new forms of access, such as this museum's plans for a branch in the north of England, are enormous. For most, the absence of adequate fiscal support and, realistically, any future prospect of it, means that the Lottery is the only major source of capital and, for many, admission charges are necessary a crucial source of operating income.

Thus, Norman Foster's American Air Museum at the Imperial War Museum's Duxford Airfield branch in Cambridgeshire has both assured the permanent preservation of a fine collection and encouraged a 50 per cent increase in attendance since its opening. Its running costs will be covered by the revenue provided by these additional visitors and nourish improved access for other collections. Duxford Airfield first opened in 1976. It now has some 400,000 visitors a year but it simply would not exist and could not have been developed as it has without the income from charges. The same applies to the museum's other branches, the Cabinet War Rooms and HMS Belfast, and to much of the re-



Despite twenty-five years of badger culling, bovine tuberculosis is still rife

Photograph: BBC

### Badgers and TB

Sir: Again, outbreaks of bovine TB are, understandably, causing concern to farmers. ("Badgers get blame for epidemic", 1 December)

Human TB has been largely conquered in Britain by better housing and nutrition. The Richards report (1972) by the Ministry of Agriculture on the outbreak of bovine TB in West Cornwall suggested that bad husbandry and management of cattle herds was a major cause.

Then the bacillus was found in a badger carcass and the efforts of the ministry and the Na-

tional Farmers Union were concentrated on the culling of badgers and other possible causes were largely ignored.

Dairy cattle are no longer fed on herb-rich grassland but on grass monocultures, and their diet is supplemented by manufactured protein-rich foods to boost milk yield. They are confined for long periods, in close proximity, in milking sheds and in winter housing. This must lead to the spread of the disease between individuals.

Selection of breeding stock takes account, almost exclusively, of milk yield. Natural immunity to disease is disregarded.

Twenty-five years of culling programmes has cost many millions of pounds and destroyed more than 25,000 badgers, and the disease is still rife.

It is to be hoped that the Krebs report, now with the minister, will soon be released and that, for the sake of farmers and the dairy industry, it will deal with the scientific evidence rather than political considerations.

J K WILLIAMS Camborne Cornwall

Sir: One hardly needs to ask if members of the National Fed-

eration of Badger Groups would welcome into their families a person spreading TB, but astonishingly they demand that dairy and beef farmers should accept the equivalent of that in their livestock herds, where TB-infected badgers are proved to be present on their land.

The need for food to be free of the infection and the welfare of those who work very hard producing it appears to be shaded out of the picture by impractical sentimentality.

J B DWANE Brighton East Sussex

### Space invaders

Sir: The threat to Earth from a devastating asteroid impact has somehow been both overstated and underestimated in Charles Arthur's article about the Chicxulub crater ("Asteroid that killed dinosaurs will strike again – in 35 million years", 4 December).

He states that the size of the object which excavated Chicxulub was 100km across. In fact, it is the new estimation of the crater's diameter which has been downgraded to 100km, from 180km. Most authorities agree that the object which struck the Yucatan and probably wiped out the dinosaurs was less than 10km across.

Fortunately for us, 100km-diameter asteroids are very rare. They may have been present in large numbers during the Earth's formation, but there are probably only a few dozen in our Solar System at the present time. On the other hand, just because an event may be expected to happen on average once every 100 million years, it does not mean that this is the most likely time interval. The arrival of two spectacular comets in our skies in the past two years is evidence that celestial objects have their own timetables, rather like London buses. No one knows when the next alien exterminator will arrive. All we know is that, sooner or later, arrive it certainly will.

PETER BOND Cranleigh, Surrey

### Heroes and villains

Sir: I must take issue with Robert Fisk's assertion (3 December) that the Crusades were "the greatest act of ethnic cleansing and barbarism in the Middle East in a thousand years". In point of fact they were episodes in the "long war" between Islam and Christendom which started with the Arab / Islamic conquest of much of the Mediterranean World in the seventh century, and ended with the defeat of the Ottoman / Islamic army before the walls of Vienna at the end of the 17th century. For much of that period, Christendom was on the defensive against triumphalist and proselytising Islamic powers – and both sides

were capable of heroism and barbarity in equal measure. R S FOSTER Sheffield

### Parliamentary oath

Sir: Your leading article on Sinn Féin and the parliamentary oath (5 December) misses the point: their refusal is based upon a rejection of the sovereignty of the British government – whether or not this is symbolised in the monarch.

However, your suggestion of an oath to pursue "liberty and justice for all" might be practical; Sinn Féin probably believe that this is what they have always been doing.

GERARD M BLAIR West Linton, Peebleshire

### Taking liberties

Sir: How can the Government deny the freedom of the individual to choose between the infinitesimal risk of infection and the primal pleasure to be derived from eating beef on the bone, whilst refusing to countenance a ban on cigarettes? Is this a question of excise duty or civil liberty? MARK EVANS London W1

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Alert! BSE in bones shock ... and what do the good people of Britain do? They pour out to the butchers and stock up on ribs, T-bone steaks, and so on. Why is this so pleasing? Partly, perhaps, because of the two-fingers-to-officialdom that it represents. Week by week, we get more and more information on possible health threats – on yesterday's front page, for example, we reported on gelatine. It is the job of government to tell us, and help us find our way through the maze of conflicting scientific evidence. Free and objective information, uncluttered by commercial interests, is a new human right.

But it isn't the role of government then to force us to change our behaviour. That kind of thinking is statist impertinence. In the case of beef, anyone who cares to buy a newspaper knows almost as much about the likely risks as any expert. Most of us are able to come to a personal decision about whether the enjoyment of certain steaks is outweighed by the anxiety about the horrible death coming if you get CJD. So why the bans? Presumably because ministers think that otherwise they, and not the consumer, might be held responsible for any deaths. But again, why? We don't ban cigarettes, motor-scooters or Japanese whisky.

Mind you, where I think the Government could help is with risk-assessment education. Most of us find it exceptionally hard to separate our vivid apprehension of a particular fate – being attacked by sharks, or dying of lung cancer – from the mathematical likelihood of it happening. Were we properly conscious of risks and odds, it would have more effect on our behaviour than any health education programme. On the other hand, it would also mean that far fewer of us would play the National Lottery.

Do newspapers matter? We have had two small victories to chalk on the fuselage this week, I think.

First, the decision of Lord Chadlington to resign as chairman of the Royal Opera House, an honourable and personal one, was only taken after the Department of Culture had absorbed the views of this, and several other newspapers, and decided that his position was difficult to sustain.

Second, the small change of heart on the subject of museum charges would certainly not have happened had we, and others (notably the London *Evening Standard*) not banged on angrily about it, publishing letters from artists and so on. But that issue, in particular, is not fully resolved. A national campaign to preserve and extend free gallery and museum access is urgently required.

Apologies corner. It was a ghastly mistake, made worse by the fact that it has happened once before. In an early edition of yesterday's paper, Thursday's letters were repeated. The mistake was spotted quickly and corrected, but that doesn't make it better for those of you who got the early edition. Last time round, someone rather charmingly wrote in pointing it out, and concluding: "If you are short of material, please feel free to use this letter more than once."

It's no joking matter, though. I owe you an explanation. The explanation is that the person editing the letters gave them the wrong computer catline. They were then pulled on to the page, at which point our entire computer system crashed. Panic. By the time we looked at paper copies of the pages hurriedly sent to the print sites, it was too late. We have a system to stop it happening but two people messed up. They are very sorry. So am I.

## QUOTE UNQUOTE

"Labour promised more openness in government. They have proved as open as a locked safe when it comes to finding out what interests ministers enjoy and how they have handled them to avoid conflicts" – John Redwood, shadow Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

"Although the Teletubbies are unquestionably the greatest proof of Britain's creative genius since Shakespeare, they do not provide role models, as William Hague is beginning to discover" – Auberon Waugh

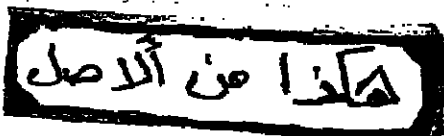
"When the official papers are released in 30 years, we will know the truth about Humphrey the Downing Street cat. We may see a vet's bill for the humane dispatch of a cat to his moggy heaven" – Terry Major-Ball

"Why not roast cat for Christmas? It was once fashionable" – Steve Jones, Professor of Genetics at University College London, referring to an 1875 article entitled "Eating Cats at West Bromwich"

"Showbiz is full of decadence, which I enjoy" – Catherine Tate Jones

"We used to refer to natural disasters as acts of God. Now it's clear that we humans are at least partly responsible. We are taking a reckless gamble with the future of our planet" – Michael Meacher, environment minister





## Guido Brunner

Guido Brunner, diplomat and politician: born Madrid 27 May 1930; European Commissioner 1974-80; Senator for the Economy, West Germany 1981; German ambassador in Madrid 1982-92; married 1958 Dr Christa Speidel; died Madrid 2 December 1997.

Guido Brunner was one of the unsung architects of the Europe we have today. Had it not been for the goodwill towards Britain of Commissioner Brunner, the EEC thermo-nuclear fusion project (JET) would not have been sited at Culham in Oxfordshire, or come to the United Kingdom at all.

Over two years of endless wrangling in the mid-1970s, Brunner clung to the belief that JET should go to where ever it had the greatest chance of scientific success, and that meant Britain or Germany. As a German, he bravely told his fellow compatriots, and in particular his fellow German Commissioner, the powerful and raucous Vice-President Willi Haferkamp, and the French chairman of the Commission, François-Xavier Ortoli, that it was Britain's turn to host a major European scientific initiative.

I had intimate first-hand knowledge of the debate, as one of the two British Labour members of the indirectly elected European Parliament Science and Energy Committee in 1976-79.

Even if the hopes of the 1970s that fusion would open up a new and virtually inexhaustible supply of energy for the 21st century have not been fulfilled, it in no way diminishes the importance of Brunner's persuasive powers or the sig-

nificance of his contribution to the European ideal, by championing the choice of a country other than his own, when his own country was the realistic rival choice.

In many other areas Brunner, a free-marketster by conviction, was helpful to Britain and its Labour ministers. One of those, with whom he had perhaps the greatest volume of business, the then Energy Minister, Tony Benn, recalls: "I last saw him by chance in the street in Madrid. He was passionately committed to the European ideal; I'm not. He was passionately committed to nuclear power; I'm not. And yet, as opposites, we worked constructively and well together and parted, as we always had been when we were both in office, the best of friends."

Like Benn, Brunner had some of the most impeccably good manners in public life, yet without a trace of snariness. Another minister, the late John Smith MP, later to be leader of the Labour Party, then Benn's Parliamentary Secretary, asked me at the time: "How do you find Guido Brunner in the European Parliament? It's a joy to work with him when I go to ministerial meetings in Brussels."

Yet the greatest cause of Brunner's life was not the development of a European technological community but the easing of Spain back into the bosom of the European family. Ambassadors come and go but Brunner was the German ambassador in Madrid for a whole crucial decade, 1982-92, and became the intimate confidant of Felipe González and held the proverbial hand of many Spanish politicians determined to return to democracy.

Indeed, Madrid was the city of his birth and to be the city of his death. Nothing in life gave him greater pleasure than to be made an honorary citizen of Madrid. His father, from a Bavarian family, and his mother, from a Swabian family, represented the Weimar Republic in Spain; Brunner senior's career was to founder through becoming *persona non grata* to Joachim von Ribbentrop, although he was protected for a time by his patron Franz von Papen, the German Chancellor before Hitler.

Brunner was educated partly at the Bergabern School in Munich and at the German School in Madrid during the Second World War. Joining the Diplomatic Service in 1955, his first job was as Consul Attaché in Liverpool - a city for which he retained a lifelong affection on account of the warmth of the people of Liverpool to a young German in his late twenties.

In 1976, I asked Brunner to come and stay over a weekend in Scotland. At a meeting of the West Lothian Labour Party over a subsequent supper, one of my more assertive and volatile constituents started a harangue on what he believed to be the unparalleled excellence of the Scottish football game. Brunner could take no more of this and quietly opined that he thought that a Mr Beckenbauer and a Mr Overath also knew, as he put it, how to kick a ball. It was done so gently, encapsulating Brunner's style, that even my loud-mouthed friend had to dissolve in laughter.

It then transpired that Brunner had an encyclopaedic knowledge of British football in the late 1950s. A Liverpool sup-

porter? Oh no, eternally loyal to Everton - and Bayern Munich and Real Madrid. Like a very different character, his friend and austere fellow commissioner, the Dane Finn-Olaf Gundelach who came to a meeting a few weeks later, he was a huge success, winning the hearts of tough local trade-unionists.

After Liverpool, Brunner returned to the foreign minister's office where he was lucky to work for the Foreign Minister, Dr Heinrich von Brentano, who was to further his career. From 1960 to 1968 he was given the very important post of German observer to the United Nations in New York. An observer might on the surface have seemed to be a somewhat humble post, but actually it was of crucial importance.

Promoted to become Head of Scientific and Technological Relations Division of the Foreign Office for two years, subsequently Foreign Office spokesman between 1970 and 1972 and Head of the Planning Staff from 1972 to 1974, Brunner was qualified with the rank of ambassador and Head of Delegation to lead the German team to the security and co-operation conferences in Europe, at Helsinki and Geneva.

This made him an obvious choice to become the second German Commissioner in the European Community. He was given, on account of his experience, the important portfolio of energy, research, science and education. He was so highly thought of by the British Commissioner, George Thomson, now Lord Thomson of Monifieth, that as Chancellor of the Heriot-Watt University he initiated an honorary degree for Brunner.

Present at the ceremony, I heard the economic historian and politician Professor Alan Thompson, then the University Public Orator, say to Brunner as he presented it:

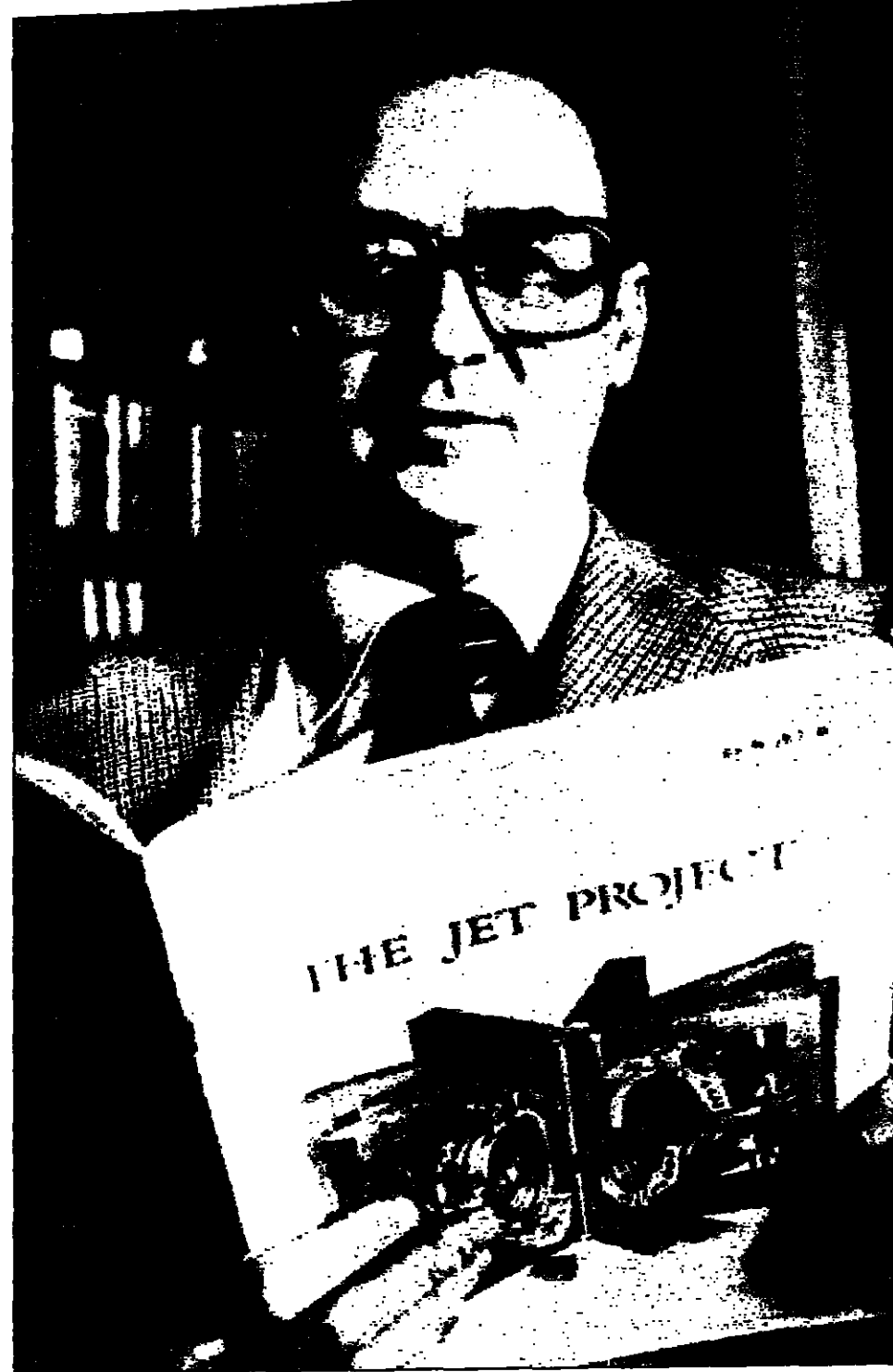
Dr Brunner has given authoritative and imaginative leadership over a wide range of research activities. He has shown special interest in industrial research into small and medium-sized industries, which, in spite of the growth of multi-national companies, still make a vital contribution to European prosperity.

Like the famous economist Dr Ernst Schumacher, he believes that small can be beautiful, and there is nothing inimical between the growth of large-scale markets such as Europe offers, and the preservation of that initiative and enterprise which small business can provide. In Britain particularly, the small firm sector can make a decisive contribution to employment and exports once the shackles of over-taxation and over-regulation are removed and Dr Brunner's own interest in this field are widely known.

One of Brunner's interests was medical research and he gave the greatest help to the late Professor John Kendrew in the establishment of the European Molecular Biology Centre in Karlsruhe. Three particular interests where the study of congenital abnormalities - a field in which compassion for the distress of malformed children can be given practical effect through new research techniques; new studies in the physiological processes of ageing; and the development of new types of heart-lung machines, capable of prolonged oxygenation.

With his wife, Dr Christa Brunner, the daughter of General Hans Speidel, a celebrated post-war German military leader, Brunner was a distinguished figure in re-establishing Germany at the forefront of civilisation.

- Tam Dalyell



Brunner: a free-marketster by conviction

Photograph: Popperfoto

## David Toguri

David Megumi Toguri, director, choreographer, dancer: born Toronto 25 October 1933; died Toronto 15 November 1997.

There was perhaps no "Toguri style" in the trademark manner of the great trio of the post-war American director/choreographers Gower Champion, Bob Fosse (Toguri especially admired the "Fosse touch") and Michael Bennett - but David Toguri did not have in Britain the quality of new material that they could develop in the United States, while the 1980s emergence of the British musical laid more emphasis on spectacular scenery than on choreography. For Toguri in any event the material and the performer dictated the actual steps; nothing was ever put in to show off or to flourish his particular signature.

I suspect he learnt something of this self-effacement at the feet of an acknowledged hero, Gene Kelly. Growing up in Toronto, where he trained with Boris Vorkoff, he had his first break in Rodgers and Hammer-



Toguri: ebullient

stein's *Flower Drum Song*, one of their weakest shows musically but with enough exotic opportunities for Kelly, directing his first Broadway musical, to exploit in the choreography supervised by Carol Haney (who had started for Bob Fosse in *The Pajama Game*).

Toguri made his West End debut when he came to London with the show in 1960 at the Palace Theatre, excelling some musical routines with an exuberant aplomb in marked contrast to the more genteel English choreography (mostly still trapped in what George

Bernard Shaw used to describe as "skirt dancing") of the period. Deciding to settle in the UK he was quickly in demand and his witty, elegantly economical style found an ideal showcase in the offbeat revue *Chaplinesque*, incorporating dance and mime, at the Edinburgh Festival and subsequently at the Vaudeville in 1964.

In 1965 he opened in *Charlie Girl*, one of those ineptly formulaic British musicals which would close in six weeks today but which then could survive dreadful reviews to run for years at the Adelphi on the strength of its star, Anna Neagle, and hustling promotion by its impresario, Harold Fielding. As John Sasaki, a Japanese houseboy, Toguri's main contribution was to partner Anna Neagle in the show's equivalent of a Broadway "eleven o'clock number", a Charleston routine which built to a frenetic climax, providing the only moments of real class in the evening and in which Toguri made Neagle (whose best dancing days were behind her) look as good as any Broadway star.

*Charlie Girl* - in which, out

of affection for Anna Neagle, he remained for three years - crystallised his choreographic ambitions and for 30 years as choreographer and increasingly also as director his career spanned an extraordinary range of work which nobody else in his field came close to matching.

As a choreographer, the list of leading directors with whom he worked regularly in the theatre or the opera house is eloquent testimony to his talent - Trevor Nunn, for whom he choreographed *The Baker's Wife* and *Measure for Measure* as well as on recreating the smoky Weimar world of *The Blue Angel*; Peter Wood, on many National Theatre productions (his work on *The Threepenny Opera* and *The Beggar's Opera* was particularly memorable); Jim Sharman - the sexy and often hilarious routines in *The Rocky Horror Show* were Toguri creations on stage and on film; David Pountney - a haunting *Kurt Weill Street Scene* for ENO; Keith Warner - Sondheim's *Pacific Overtures*, with a stunning Toguri-staged finale as Japan moved into the technological age, also for ENO; and Richard Eyre.

He choreographed the triumphant Eyre production of *Gyps and Dolls* at the National in 1982 (winning the SOLT Best Choreography Award), providing exhilarating and dynamic musical staging throughout (his *Crapshooters Ballet* was perhaps the best staging of his career). He directed and choreographed the show in Australia in 1986 and returned to the National production for its 1996 revival, which was playing its final performances at the time of his death.

For television his most outstanding work was the *Rock Follies* series, while his movies less in *Memphis Belle*, *Absolute Beginners* (in which his electric jive numbers jolted the film into occasional life) and *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* He was also in constant demand for video work, about which he was extremely selective - he staged David Bowie's *Blue Jean*, Freddie Mercury's *A Crazy Little Thing Called Love*, and most memorably, Tina Turner's sizzling *Break Every Rule*. He never stopped enjoying working with the young and inexperienced; he became a valuable mainstay of

both the National Youth Theatre and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

He always worked to the strengths of his performers and had a particularly rare talent for coaxing actors inexperienced in choreography ("I can't dance but I can move a bit," as they usually tend to put it) into often astonishing feats. On the revival of the Bernstein/Comden and Green *Wonderful Town* at Watford and then at the Queen's Theatre, he preserved all the genuine charm of an essentially small-scale show but also devised some superb set pieces, integrating them seamlessly into the fabric of the characters and the story. He worked brilliantly with Maureen Lipman (playing Ruth Sherwood, the self-deprecating loser in love in 1930s Greenwich Village) so that her physical idiosyncrasies became those of the character and the funny, unusual steps seemed invented on the wing - especially in a genuinely spirit-lifting Conga routine involving a radiant Lipman and six Brazilian sailors.

I first collaborated with him on the 1974 Mermaid Theatre

show *Cole*, which demanded of him a whole gallery of choreographic styles from different periods - the steamy Bowery waltz of "Brush Up Your Shakespeare", a burlesque sequence with Julia McKenzie as a louché Madam in "Come On In", pulsating tap-routines ("Anything Goes") and, in "Leader of a Big Time Band", a whirlwind jitterbug for the youngest couple in the company which I asked for late in rehearsal and which, open-mouthed, I watched him stage in just a few minutes at the end of a long day.

In *Cole* he created especially inventive work for Una Stubbs, then at the peak of her dancing career. With the help of the Porter estate, the score of Porter's 1920s jazz ballet *Within the Quota* was reconstructed and for Stubbs, dressed in the briefest of black and gold shifts and carrying a huge ostrich feather fan, he devised an impudent, teasingly sensual five minutes that had the quality of an Erté drawing come to life.

Also for Una Stubbs, this time in white chiffon, he could turn to creating a dreamily romantic duet with the late Ken-

neth Nelson against a moving cloudscape to the yearning pulse of "Night and Day". His contribution indeed was such that I felt he must have a co-directing rather than a solely choreographic credit; typically of him in a business in which billing often becomes ludicrously self-important, he never requested this for himself.

For the past three years, although able to work intermittently, he had to battle with the cancer which killed him. Characteristically for a man whose life away from the heightened temperature of show-business was calm, quiet and centred round his close family (he was one of eight children and had a whole tribe of adoring nieces and nephews) and friends, it was fought with dignity, humour and grace.

It was impossible to believe that David Toguri was approaching 65; although his hair in recent years had whitened he had, like most former dancers, kept himself in formidable trim and in rehearsal when at his most ebullient (which was most of the time) he often seemed no more than sixteen and a half.

- Alan Strachan

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding announcements, Memorials) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1, Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL, telephone 020 7123 2912 (24-hour answering machine 020 7123 2911) or faxed to 020 7123 2910, and are charged at £1.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, funerals, forthcoming marriages, marriages, forthcoming marriages, marriages) must be submitted in writing (for family) and are charged at £10 a line (VAT extra). They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

### Lectures

TODAY: National Gallery: Norman Coady, "Clad Tidings (1): Veronese, The Consecration of Saint Nicholas", 12pm.

Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "Snakes and Ladders: artists' fluctuating reputations", 1pm.

British Museum: George Hart, "Ancient Interconnections: Egypt and the Aegean world", 1.15pm.

### TOMORROW

Tate Gallery: Sarah O'Brien Twobly, "Commentary on the 1997 Turner Prize", 4pm.

National Portrait Gallery: Paul Webb, "Ivor Novello", 3pm.

### ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron of the National Association for Gifted Children, attends a concert to mark the 50th anniversary of the institution of the College of William, Manchester, Lancashire, 11th January.

### Changing of the Guard

TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment performs the Changing of the Guard ceremony at Buckingham Palace, 11th January.

### Birthdays

TODAY: Mrs Janet Anderson MP, Vice-Chamberlain of HM Household, 48; Lord Ashley of Stoke, former MP, 75; The Right Rev Patrick Barry, Abbot of Ampleforth, 80; Mr Dave Brubeck, jazz musician, 77; Lord Clinton-Davis, Minister of State for Trade, 69; Lord Eassie, former Lord Justice-General of Scotland, 78; Miss Jill Hammesley-Parker, table-tennis player, 46; Mr Stephen Hepburn MP, 38; Mr Geoffrey Hoon MP, Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department, 44; Sir Maurice Kay, High Court judge, 55; Mr Jonathan King, pop producer, 55; Mrs Helen Liddell MP, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, 47; Sir Richard Lloyd, chairman, Arqiva plc, 69; Sir Nicholas Lyell QC MP, 59; The Right Rev Professor Eric Mercer, former Bishop of Exeter, 80; Sir Martin Moore-Bick, High Court judge, 51; Mr Eric Newby, writer, 78; George Pinches, gynaecological surgeon, 75; Professor Lord Porter of Luddenhams, Chairman of the Centre for Photomolecular Sciences, 77; Mr Kato Ruzburg, motor-racing champion, 78; Miss Ellen Buxton, actress, 65; Mr Richard Shepherd MP, 55; Professor Sir Bryan Thwaites, former Principal, Westfield College, 74; Mr Charles Vance, actor, director and producer, 68; The Right Rev Peter Walker, former Bishop of Ely, 78; Mr Cyril Washbrook, cricketer, 83; Mr Peter Willey, cricketer, 48.

TOMORROW: Sir Fred Atkinson, economist, 78; Miss Ellen Buxton, actress, 65; Professor Noam Chomsky, linguist, 69; Lord Elystan Morgan, circuit judge, 65; Mr Kaffie Fassett, textile designer, 60; Professor Sir Abraham Goldberg, physician, 74; Professor Norman Gower, Principal, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, 57; Sir Bryan Hopkin, economist, 83; The Countess of Linrick, Chairman Emeritus, British Red Cross Society, 62; Sir Sydney

Sammelton, first British Film Commissioner, 72; Dr Mario Soares, former President of Portugal, 73; The Rev Ronald Thomson, former Principal, St Chad's College, Durham, 71; Miss Helen Watts, singer, 70.

### Anniversaries

TODAY: Births: Warren Hastings, first Governor-General of India, 1732. Deaths: Anthony Hollopie, novelist and poet, 1882. On this day: The Theatre Royal, Covent Garden (now the Royal Opera House), was opened, 1732. Tomorrow is the Feast Day of St Ambrose of Milan, St Baudile or Boethius, St Eutychianos, St Martin of Sanjour and St Servus.

### Luncheons

Institute of United States Studies: Mr Henry Gough, Speaker of the American House of Representatives, was the guest of honor at a luncheon of the Institute of United States Studies in Lincoln's Inn yesterday. Business Treasurer, Chairman of the Institute, was in the Chair. Mr Robert Worcester and Lord Rees-Mogg also spoke.

Saints and Sinners Club: Mr John Major MP was the guest of honor at the Saints and Sinners Christmas Luncheon held yesterday at the Savoy Hotel, London WC2. The Chairman of the Club, Mr Jimmy Tarbuck, and the Hon Secretary, Mr Neil Benson, also spoke.

## FAITH & REASON

### Blair's hidden agenda for the Church

Quietly, behind the scenes, New Labour is setting about creating a New Church of England. Andrew Brown predicts major changes.

One of the things about being badly beaten up is that after the first few shocks you don't notice much of what's happening: fresh blows can land and the damage only appears afterwards. So it has taken a while for the Church of England to notice what was done to it last week by the Blair government, and to realise, as it struggles up from a disastrous Synod meeting, that this time something vital may have been broken.

The man who put his boot into the kidneys was Stuart Bell MP, whose title is one of those grand vacancies that bubble out of the Establishment like cuckoo spit: he is the Second Church Estates Commissioner. The first, of course, the Archbishop of Canterbury, but he doesn't matter. For Mr Bell's role, by contrast with his title, is not vacuous at all. He is the Government's proconsul, sent to govern the Church of England. Perhaps this overestimates his importance. Proconsuls, after all, were

sent to govern the grandest and richest parts of the Empire. Mr Bell, in his conversations with the press, has given the impression that he is only a District Commissioner, sent into the bush to dispense justice to a particularly benighted, if colourful, tribe of savages. They are to be brought within the reach of civilisation, and they are to be grateful for it.

Of course, this message is not delivered too crudely to the natives. The Maxim guns stay under wraps, and the casual listener, unused in bureaucratic language, might think he was merely paying ceremonial obeisance to their customs, not announcing that everything continued on the Government's sufferance.

Last week, he told the General Synod: "The link between Church and State is not, as some might think, obsolete or stagnant, but an evolving and dynamic partnership." So much windy nonsense has been talked about change, modernity, and relevance in the Synod that its members can be forgiven for not noticing that this particular rhetoric has a simple, unambiguous English translation: "We're going to change everything we feel like changing, and you must like it or lump it. New Labour: New Church of England."

A few were primed to notice this. The members of the Crown Appointments Commission (among them the Archbishop of Canterbury) know perfectly well that the Blair government has turned down both their choices for the See of Liverpool, something Mrs Thatcher never quite dared do, for all the arrogance of her toadies towards the Church. When Dr Carey was pressed about this in questions, he forgot his script and after preliminary stonewalling finally admitted: "I don't know how the news got out." Thus another illusion of the Church's importance is ended; and it did so with a whimper. If Dr Carey really does not know how the news got out, the answer is that it came from Downing Street.

In case anyone had missed the significance of this Mr Bell told the press afterwards the Government would continue to intervene in specific appointments of bishops. This is not the affectation of one District Commissioner, operating miles from the central administration: it is the belief of most of the devout and able Christians in this government that the Bench of Bishops, from the Archbishops down, have been promoted beyond their abilities, and would never have reached the top in a healthy organisation. Curiously, they don't blame the Church

itself so much as the previous government and especially the evangelical mafia around Mrs Thatcher and her appointments secretary, Robin Calford, or Calford as he was then known in Lambeth Palace, whose pressure was, of course, exerted more subtly.

So now the Government has stepped in: the whole process of comfortable, creeping disestablishment, which for the last 30 years has looked as if it would lead inevitably to a church which Parliament would not dare to interfere with, firmly established in the possession of its privileges and endowments, has come to a juddering halt. Mr Blair's office will determine who the bishops are. The Church Commissioners will continue to exist, and matter. In exchange, the Church of England is told by Mr Bell that establishment is safe, and that it did a good job in coping with the great outpouring of inarticulate (but scarcely Christian) sentiment over the death of Diana. Princess of Wales - even though privately senior New Labour figures think it reacted rather poorly.

It is clearly an offer they can't refuse; but I don't see how they can possibly accept it, either.

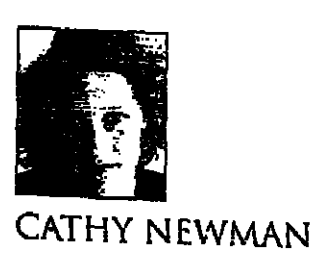
• Faith & Reason is edited by Paul Valley



# 23/SHARES

## Vodafone at an all-time high as telecoms re-rating continues

### MARKET REPORT



CATHY NEWMAN

Dealers' phones were ringing for telecoms stocks as the wholesale re-rating of the sector continued apace. Vodafone has been the biggest beneficiary over the past few weeks, and yesterday was no exception. The shares, which floated below the 150p mark, reached an all-time high last night, closing at 403.5p, with more than 13 million shares traded.

Analysts say talk of bid speculation was wide of the mark. Instead, they pointed to an upgrade of cellular stocks around Europe, with Scandinavian companies like Netcom and Europoint currently in favour.

Shares of UK cellular phone groups have been lagging behind their European peers, so the recent renaissance seems long overdue. Added to that, Vodafone's subscriber numbers for the final quarter of the

year are looking good, experts say. Buy notes from Societe Generale and "accumulate" advice from Merrill Lynch also helped the shares along the way.

The numbers came up for Orange too, although the vagaries of the new sets system played their part here. At one point the group shot up 17p, but volume was a fairly light 1 million.

Most other stocks in the sector were on the rise, with BT adding 1.5p to 475p. There was one notable - although not, recently, unusual - exception, London prepared to exit the second division as it dropped another 5p to 102.5p.

Twist had a down and an up day, starting the session in negative territory, but ending most definitely positive after a strong start on Wall Street. Having drifted as much as 34 points down after lunch, the in-

dex ended well above the 5000 mark again, up 60.6 points at 5142.9.

Talk of a bid early next week for Delta, the electric cables and industrial services company, sent the shares up 4.5p to 261.5p. Nearly 770,000 shares were traded, after dealers speculated that a bidder could offer £3 a share for the company. Menier-Swain, another company in the sector, was taken over by Cooper Industries last month for £164.5m, so the market obviously feels it's time for further corporate action.

Billiton was the most wanted blue chip, up 7.25p to 155p. The base metals company, which emerged from the South African mining group in July, sent the shares into freefall recently when it issued a gloomy outlook on trading. But it finally bounced

yesterday after a series of meetings with institutional investors. The house brokers have also put out buy notes.

Financial stocks were once again being asked for after reports of a merger between UBS and Swiss Bank Corporation. Lloyds, encouraged by an SBC Warburg buy recommendation, jumped 28p to 760p. Royal Bank of Scotland

rose 20p to 740p, and NatWest - the perpetual bid target - surged 14.5p to 940p.

BTR was spurred, though, after it issued warnings on three fronts. The company said sterling continued to cause problems and advised that the troubles in Asia could also have an impact. Moreover, it alluded to difficulties in South America. The shares closed 25.5p poorer at 182.5p. An array of analysts' downgrades are expected to follow. In the meantime, SBC Warburg reckons the company has a break-even value of 200p.

BOC had a mixed time. The president of its US gas operations, Seif Ghazemi, quit, and sent the shares tumbling 3.2p to 94.3p at one point. However, they staged a recovery, and ended 5p better at 98p.

British Biotech topped the second-line fallers, shedding

11p to 107.5p, after Societe Generale said it was overvalued. Ashbury Group did better, closing 3p up at 31.5p on the back of a 178 per cent increase in interim profits.

Landround, the travel promotions company, was another to benefit from good results. The company, which floated on AIM in August, announced a 49 per cent increase in profit before tax and flotation expenses of £506,000. As a result, the shares zoomed up 10p to 107.5p.

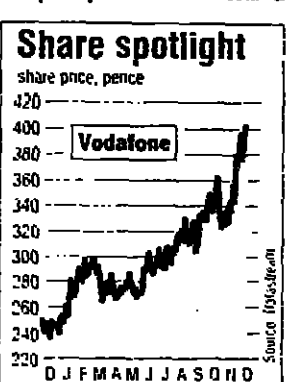
Several exporters breathed a sigh of relief, after the pound weakened. Siebe closed 21p richer at £124.2, and British Steel edged up 0.5p to 139p at close of play. Smiths Industries also put on a spurt, notching up another 30p to close at 880p.

Harrisons & Crossfield meanwhile soared 6.5p to 123.5p after selling its Edward Baker Petfoods business for £106.3m.

### TAKING CREDIT

Corporate Executive Search International, the headhunter, hit the right spot yesterday when it pounced on a new chief executive from rival firm Russell Reynolds. The company, which is listed on AIM, added 0.5p to close at 4p after appointing Roger Evans. At the same time, it said Mark Shields, managing director and one of the founders, would relinquish his role. He will remain on the board, but will work on a project-by-project basis, Corporate Executive said.

Presbury Group, the AIM-quoted property company, is rumoured to be gearing up for some kind of corporate activity. The company, which closed up 0.25p to 5.25p, is headed by Nick Leslau. Presbury bought Mr Leslau's own private property company, Edenhawk, for £11.5m last month.



52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PE Code
Alcoholic Beverages							
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52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PE Code
Banks, Merchant							
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52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PE Code
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52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PE Code
Banks, Retail							
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PE Code
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Banks, Retail							
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PE Code
Food Producers							
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PE Code
Food Producers							
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PE Code
Food Producers							
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700

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Food Producers							
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700
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52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PE Code
Food Producers							
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700
32	32	28	Barclays	32.00	+0.00	143	700

Failey	10.00	+0.50	4.0	6.3	124	100	Flann Smith Co	17.00		3.8	6004	2
50 Green	400.00	+6.50	2.7	33.6	406	51	Flann Wild Zero	49.00			5468	1
4 Global Gp	0.50		6.2	7.1	2706	100	Flann Wild Zero	10.00		4.8	0	1
Greenwoods	271.00	+1.00			249	71	Flann Wild Zero	67.75	+1.00	8.4	0	1
100 Hadenwood	161.00		5.5	H.6	2767	10	F&C Long	98.25	+1.00		6165	0
4 Hillbrook	87.50	+0.50	7.9	9.1	204	67	F&C Long	16.75	+0.25	1.7	210	1
15 Linton Park	382.50		5.6	9.7	205	106	F&C Long	17.50	+0.25	1.7	125	1



## Watchdog set to crack down on Railtrack charges

The rail regulator will next week launch a review of track access charges levied by Railtrack, which is likely to mean a cut in the company's revenues.

Randeep Ramesh, Transport Correspondent, reports on the latest toughening in the operating regime for the group which owns the track and signal network.

John Swift QC, the regulator, is to tighten the price formula covering billions of pounds of track access charges, paid by operators to Railtrack. The existing price control, which cuts charges by two per cent below inflation each year, expires in 2001.

What has perturbed the regulator is not only that Railtrack is entitled to rake in large access fees, but that it also has no obligation to spend them on the network at the level the Regulator assumed when he allowed the company to nearly double its charges in 1995.

In fact, until Mr Swift had wrung from Railtrack a licence amendment which committed the company to £16bn of spending over a decade, executives were not bound by any contractual arrangements. Officials have also noted that Railtrack made a pre-tax profit of £346m - when 94 per cent of its income came from fixed track access charges.

The high level of the track access were meant to ensure that a replacement railway would be built in the "fullness of time". It was not, say officials, there to bolster Railtrack's bottom line.

The purpose of the regulator's announcement next week not simply to make it cheaper for train companies to run trains. One option being considered would see the track charges reduced and then any savings being used to cut subsidy to the operators.

Despite the legal complexities this would entail, officials at the Office of the Rail Regulator (ORR) point out that it would mean there would be more money available for the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions.

A tough price review would certainly affect the company's profitability but, analysts point out, some of it could be made up by the largely property rental and sales. Not all track charges would be altered. They vary in length from seven to 15 years - having started in 1994.

Another option is for the regulator to force Railtrack to become "more efficient". This would see a change in the performance regime which many train companies suspect is being too easily met by Railtrack. Last year, one of the "principal reasons" that revenue from the passenger train franchises grew by £116m was that "there was a substantial improvement in the contribution from the performance regime".

One company Connex is appealing to get its £9m bill reduced because, it argues, the performance of Railtrack in the yardstick year of 1994 was "dismal". More worrying for Railtrack is that Mr Swift is investigating a £46m "weather provision" made in 1997. This was £26m more than the previous year and it is understood Mr Swift has "concerns" about the amount put aside.

City pundits were blunter. "Railtrack has been taking the regulator for a ride. It is no surprise that he will play hardball," said one analyst.

Mr Swift is also playing a political game. Rather than co-ordinating his actions with John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for transport, the regulator has "gone it alone". This is unlikely to endear him to Mr Prescott, now in Kyoto for the conference on climate change - who has made it clear he wishes to be kept abreast of any new developments.

The news of the review will dampen Railtrack's high spirits. Earlier this month, the company announced a 10 per cent increase in interim pre-tax profits.

Pre-tax profits increased £173m to £190m before Railtrack's windfall tax of £155m. The improved profits were made despite a £18m restructuring charge and a £28m bad weather provision.

The results were cautiously welcomed by Mr Swift. Noting a 38 per cent increase in Railtrack's investment programme, he said: "It is long overdue but the interim results show that it is now under way."



High stakes: The super-rich who visit London's top casinos can gamble away up to £10m in a single night, in a lifestyle exemplified by Sharon Stone in the film 'Casino'

## London Clubs hit by high rollers on a lucky streak

Casino operators don't always enjoy a lucky roll of the dice. London Clubs International has this year had its bid for troubled rival Capital Corporation blocked by the Government and is being eased out of the Ritz Hotel. Now its profits have been dented by a bunch of high rollers who struck lucky. Nigel Cape, City Correspondent, reports on tougher times in the casino industry.

London Clubs, which operates the Ritz and Les Ambassadeurs casinos in central London yesterday blamed a winning streak by some of its heaviest gamblers for a sharp fall in half year profits.

Chief executive Alan Goodenough said: "Good fortunes were enjoyed by a number of our major customers both at the Ritz and more unusually at the Rendezvous."

Top casinos define high rollers as the handful of super-rich who can gamble away up to £10m in a single night. In addition there is a group of several hundred international players who are willing to stake anything from £500,000 to £5m a session. This group's success at the roulette and blackjack tables forced London Clubs' half year profits down from £19.9m to £14.4m.

London Clubs said trading since the half year had seen many punters hit a losing streak, helping figures for the first eight months higher than last year. However, there are concerns in the industry that the effect of the strong pound and the financial crisis in Asia could affect even the wealthiest punters.

Mr Goodenough said the volatility at the upper end of the market, together with frustration over the lack of progress in the de-regulation of the industry had persuaded the company to accelerate its plans to expand outside Britain. "The potential for growth in the UK without de-regulation benefits is restricted. So we are looking at international markets," he said.

The casino industry has long complained that it is disadvantaged against other forms of gambling in Britain and against other casino markets around the world by the UK's gaming regulations. These restrict the number of slot machines that can be installed in casinos and state that customers must become a member of a casino 24 hours before being allowed entry.

London Clubs will lose its licence to operate the Ritz Hotel casino next June after failing to agree a new licence with the hotel's owners, the Barclay Brothers. It plans to open a new casino in St James Street next July.

A company led by Aidan Barclay, the son of David Barclay is currently seeking the licence to operate the Ritz Hotel casino. The application is currently being heard by Westminster magistrates and a ruling is expected later this month.

The application is being supported by Lord King, the former British Airways chairman, and the industrialist Lord Hanson. The Barclay brothers, who bought the Ritz in 1995, have said they have no financial interest in the company applying for the licence.

With odds on expansion looking poor at home, LCI is trying its luck abroad. It yesterday confirmed plans to invest \$50m in a 25 per cent stake in Aladdin Gaming, the US group which is re-developing the Aladdin hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

## Far East turmoil prompts fresh BTR profits warning

BTR yesterday issued its third profit warning in two years, plunging shares in the troubled conglomerate to a six-year low. Despite their frustration, Peter Thal Larsen and shareholders have little choice but to support the chief executive Ian Strachan's attempts to turn the group around.

In a trading statement, BTR said it expected second-half profits to be "more or less in line with the restated first half results". That's in contrast with the upbeat outlook the group gave in September, when Mr Strachan said he expected BTR "to show improvement in the second half of this year over the first half".

The stock market reacted viciously, pushing BTR shares down 25.5p to 182.5p as analysts slashed their profit forecasts for the year to December by as much as 10 per cent. Profits are now expected to come in at about £1.06bn.

BTR shares have lost almost half of their value since Mr Strachan took over as chief executive in January 1996, underperforming the FTSE 100 index by 60 per cent. Industry experts reacted to the news with an air of resignation. "People are just punch-drunk with BTR," said one observer. "They are totally fed up with it."

BTR blamed the profits disappointment on the economic turmoil in Asia and South America and the renewed strength of sterling. The group, which has £900 million of annual sales in emerging markets and is highly exposed to the automotive industry, has been particularly hit by rising interest rates in Brazil. "Auto

sales were down 60 per cent in November," Mr Strachan said.

Meanwhile, BTR said the rise of sterling would also affect full-year figures. The group now estimates that currency movements will wipe £75m off its profits, compared to an earlier estimate of £63m. Mr Strachan said the strong pound was also hurting subsidiaries with substantial exports like Brook-Hansen, its electric motors unit. "Currency hits you both ways - in the export market and in import substitution," said Mr Strachan.

Despite the gloom, few observers felt there was any option but to back the management's attempts to concentrate on its main engineering businesses. "It's difficult to see how you could engineer another major rethink," said an analyst. "The BTR team had better stick to their task."

Since Mr Strachan took over, he has implemented a strategy of slimming BTR down to a core of engineering businesses. The group has largely completed the first phase of the disposal program, selling businesses with annual turnover of £2.3bn, and last month sold its polymeric products division to a management buyout team for £151m. It is currently negotiating the sale of its packaging division, which is expected to raise £3bn, and a clutch of smaller subsidiaries. The group hopes to complete the sales next year. "We've had tremendous interest in all of those businesses," Mr Strachan said.

Mr Strachan said the proceeds would be re-invested in the four core engineering divisions: automotive; control systems; power drives; and specialist engineering. He also said the group would return a "significant proportion" of the cash to shareholders.

## Bristol & West launches first ISA scheme

Bristol & West today launched what it believes will be the first account linked to ISA, the Government's new savings scheme. The building society is planning to launch its savings scheme next week, 16 months ahead of the planned Individual Savings Account, which is officially due out in April 1999.

Details of the ISA, the tax-exempt vehicle that will replace PEPs and TESSAs, and which the Government says is designed to encourage millions of people to get into the savings habit, were announced earlier this week.

To help people on modest incomes save for an ISA, the Bristol & West account can be opened with as little as £10, with the maximum investment set at £1,000.

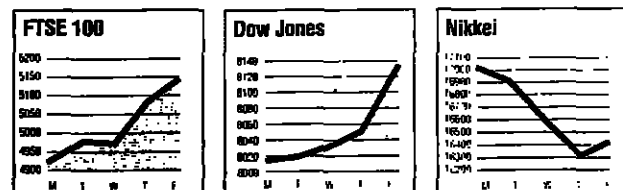
It will pay 7.2 per cent gross per annum, although the account holder will lose all in-

terest on the money removed before the maturity date of May 6 1999.

Assuming no money is taken out, all interest will be paid on maturity and the aim is to pay that tax-free, within the ISA rules. Bristol & West's product manager Martin Broomfield said: "Our primary concern is to ensure that the public do not abandon the concept of saving between now and the introduction of the ISA."

"We also want to try and maximise the savers' tax-free earnings within the new guidelines. We will do our best to get our pre-ISA accepted as an ISA, as we did with our pre-TESSA." The Government ran into criticism when it launched the ISA on Tuesday. It was accused of squeezing the middle classes after announcing that TESSAs and PEP savings accounts worth more than £50,000 would be taxed from April 1999.

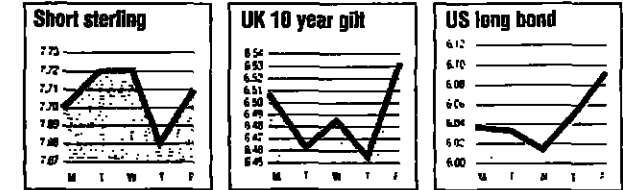
## STOCK MARKETS



\*Dow Jones index and graph as 5pm

Indices	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5142.90	60.60	1.19	5367.30	3882.70	3.42
FTSE 250	4751.30	26.80	0.57	4963.80	4321.80	3.35
FTSE 350	2469.00	26.20	1.07	2570.50	1935.70	3.41
FTSE All Share	2469.35	24.26	1.02	2507.68	1942.22	3.40
FTSE Smallcap	2296.5	5.10	0.22	2407.40	2127.50	3.32
FTSE Fledgling	1248.5	0.90	0.07	1346.50	1198.70	3.38
FTSE AIM	975.9	5.30	0.55	1138.00	965.90	1.06
Dow Jones	8114.32	82.56	1.03	8299.03	6236.05	1.68
Nikkei	16424.48	117.69	0.72	21001.90	14966.13	0.94
Hang Seng	11527.60	52.66	0.46	16820.31	8775.88	3.66
Dax	4170.08	30.28	0.73	4459.99	2780.76	1.76

## INTEREST RATES

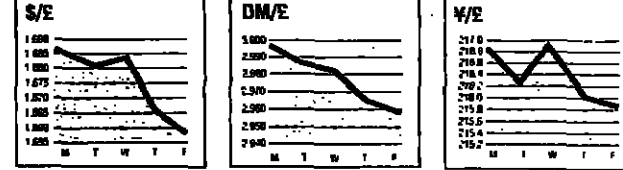


Money Market Rates	3 month	1 yr	1 yr chg	10 year	1 yr chg	Long bond	1 yr chg
UK	7.75	1.34	7.91	0.95	6.53	-1.11	6.46
US	5.91	0.36	6.00	0.31	5.91	-0.32	6.10
Japan	0.71	0.23	0.71	0.13	1.82	-0.70	2.43
Germany	3.76	0.52	4.09	0.79	5.42	-0.44	5.98

## MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg	Falls	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg
Christies Int'l	249.50	20.00	8.71	TI Group	500.00	-10.00	-1.96
Harlemons & Cro	123.50	6.50	5.56	Tomkins PLC	306.00	-6.25	-2.00
London Clubs	299.00	14.00	5.09	Commercial Int	869.00	-19.00	-2.14
Bristol PLC	155.00	7.25	4.91	RJB Mining PLC	180.00	-5.00	-3.03

## CURRENCIES



Pound	at 5pm	Change	% Chg	Dollar	at 5pm	Change	% Chg
Dollar	1.6545	-0.134c	-1.6270	Sterling	0.6030	+0.48c	0.6146
D-Mark	2.9585	-0.12p	2.5348	D-Mark	1.7835	+1.42p	1.5515
Yen	215.96	-10.25	183.51	Yen	130.22	+10.90	112.49
£ Index	104.90	-0.40	91.80	£ Index	107.90	+0.40	97.70

## OTHER INDICATORS

at 5pm	Close	Chg	% Chg	at 5pm	Close	% Chg	at 5pm
Brent Oil (\$)	17.89	0.17	24.65	GDP	113.90	3.80	109.7
Gold (\$)	287.95	-0.10	371.85	RPI	159.50	3.7	153.81
Silver (\$)	5.31	0.01	4.75	Base Rates	7.25	6.00	

www.bloomberg.com

source: Bloomberg

## Embattled UBS poised for merger with SBC

Swiss banking giant UBS is poised for a multi-billion merger of part or all of its operations with its rival SBC, banking sources said last night. As Leo Paterson reports, a merger may be the only lifeline for embattled UBS.

Employees of Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) have been summoned to weekend meetings to hear details of their fate, according to banking sources. UBS is expected to announce a merger with rival Swiss Bank Corporation (SBC), a move which would lead to a jobs "bloodbath" in both the City and elsewhere. A full-scale merger of the two banks would create one of the largest banks in the world, with assets of more than £350bn.

"UBS has been in paralysis for six months because there's been a feeling that a major announcement is on its way. The bank's lost several key staff in the process," said one insider yesterday.

Discussions between the two banks are thought to have begun some months ago, following UBS's snub to Switzerland's third banking giant, Credit Suisse First Boston

(CSFB), last year. In April 1996, UBS rejected overtures from CSFB, which recently took control of parts of BZW, Barclays' investment banking arm.

Sources close to UBS say the beleaguered bank could have off some of its banking activities and merge the remainder with SBC. JP Morgan, the US investment bank, has been named as a likely bidder for the Swiss bank's sizeable equities business. And speculation has also focused on Deutsche Bank, the German banking giant, as a possible purchaser of UBS's Swiss client portfolio.

Shares in both UBS, whose board met yesterday, and SBC, were sharply higher in Zurich trading yesterday.

The Swiss market is heavily over-banked, and all three Swiss banking giants posted heavy losses last year. Merger speculation has been heightened in recent weeks following comments from a major UBS shareholder, Swiss investor Martin Ebner. Mr Ebner recently suggested that it would make sense for two of the Swiss banks to merge and then have off some business or joint forces with a foreign partner.

"UBS is no longer master of its own destiny. If it tries to stay on its own, it's already too late for it to succeed," commented one source last night.

## Matra chief appointed head of Airbus

A senior French aerospace executive, Noel Forgeard, is set to be appointed as the new managing director of the four-nation aircraft consortium Airbus Industrie.

Confirmation that Mr Forgeard is to take over the post when Jean Pierson retires next year is expected before Christmas. Mr Forgeard is currently a board member of the French defence electronics group Lagardere and chairman of its Matra space and defence division.

The appointment is key since Mr Forgeard will be one of the executives charged with taking Airbus forward as a single corporate entity from 1999.

Airbus held a meeting of its supervisory board in Toulouse yesterday to discuss Mr Pierson's successor but a spokesman refused to comment on whether a candidate had been selected or when an announcement might be made.

However, sources in the office of the French Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, confirmed that Mr Forgeard was France's preferred candidate for the post.

Mr Forgeard is part of that charmed inner circle of Frenchmen who alternate between senior posts in government and industry. A graduate of the prestigious Ecole Polytechnique,

he has acted as adviser to French transport and armed forces ministers and sat in Jacques Chirac's cabinet in 1986 in between spells in the French steel industry with Usinor-Sacilor.

It was always certain that a Frenchman would take over the post from Mr Pierson, who was a senior executive with the French Airbus partner Aerospatiale before taking up his present job.

Other candidates linked with the job include Christian Blanc, the former chairman of Air France, Louis Gallois, chairman of the state French railway SNCF, and Gerard Blanc, director of Airbus operations at Aerospatiale.

British Aerospace, which has a 20 per cent stake in Airbus, is familiar with Mr Forgeard. Its missiles division is part of the Anglo-French joint venture Maitre BAe which Mr Forgeard is responsible for. BAe also part-owned the parent group Lagardere in its unsuccessful bid for the defence electronics group Thomson-CSF.

The chairman of the Airbus supervisory board, Edzard Reuter, formerly head of Daimler Benz Aerospace, is also due to retire next March. He is expected to be replaced by his successor at Dasa, Manfred Bischoff, though this has not yet been confirmed.

- Michael Harrison





JEREMY WARNER

ON WHY IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN BETTER TO ALLOW KOREA TO GO UNDER AND THE MERGER OF UBS AND SBC

## Why not allow Korea to go to the wall?

What on earth persuades the international community to come to the aid of countries that get themselves into economic difficulties, as it did this week with a record-breaking \$55bn package of support for Korea?

Very few of us these days would think it right to bail out an ailing industrial company, or even a bank, and it is only charity which leads us either privately or through the mechanism of the welfare state to help those who should be helping themselves. So why rescue the sick man of Asia?

Explanations range from the altruistic to the self-interested, but certainly the specific case of Korea is a rather harder one to justify than usual. If only because Korea is a comparatively rich and successful country. Even we in Britain are being forced to contribute to this massive bailout, both indirectly through our contributions to the International Monetary Fund, and directly with our own \$1.25bn line of standby credit.

On any perspective, this is a bizarre turn of events. Britain still seems prepared to pay Korea's leading corporations huge amounts of money in state aid to set up in business here. Now we are proposing to subsidise them at the other end of the spectrum too.

The West really only has itself to blame for the crisis in the Far East. It is partly our Western money that funded the breakneck pace of growth in the Pacific Rim economies. For every couple of jobs created with our money at Daewoo in Seoul, we lost a couple at Rover in Coventry, but still we cheered from the sidelines, wowed by the success of the Asian Tigers.

Until the present crisis, few had anything

but praise for the Far Eastern economic model, of which Korea seemed to be a shining example. Before the election, Tony Blair even went so far as to make one of his policy-setting speeches from the Pacific Rim, as if to say the way they do it out here is what we in Britain should be aiming for too.

As their manufacturing base grew and prospered, we began in an act of reckless insanity to start competing with our European partners for their favours. Worse, our own regions would outbid each other for their "expertise" and "knowhow" with ever larger amounts of taxpayers' money.

As we now know, these economies are more epitomised by corruption, cronyism and easy money than anything resembling the miraculous. Isn't it about time all this ended? Isn't it about time we turned off the life support machine?

Er, well, maybe not. Satisfying though it might be to see the Korean economy go down the swanney, it probably wouldn't be in our interests. A Korean collapse would greatly exaggerate the already serious economic crisis in the Far East, with damaging knock-on effects into the world economy.

At its most extreme the effect might be to plunge the global economy into a deflationary spiral. In the short term at least, it therefore cannot be in our interests to let these economies go to the wall. Moreover, though the Far East seems to have done rather better out of the bargain than us, these are still important markets for Western goods. As a consequence, the slowdown in these economies is already threatening growth in the West as well.

The unpleasant irony is, that if these were smaller, less significant and poorer economies, nobody would have lifted a finger to help them. It is because their collapse threatens our own prosperity that we are willing to lend support.

The other main argument for this bailout is that it comes at a high price. The international package of aid is only a temporary bridging loan: everyone expects to get their money back. More importantly, the IMF is able to extract a weighty level of economic and structural reform as a condition of its support. This is judged important not just because it ought to bury the lax, corrupt and dirigiste ways of the past, but also because it allows the IMF to impose the American economic model on a region which has habitually cherry-picked the most advantageous aspects of our Anglo-Saxon ways while attempting to disregard the rest.

In a sense, what the IMF is doing is its own particular form of economic imperialism. Because the Asian economies have so ruthlessly exploited our own domestic economies and capital markets while stubbornly failing to open up their own, it seems somehow justifiable. Britain knows all about the humiliation of going through the IMF mangle, because we were there ourselves in the mid-1970s. We also know that it is possible to see in the reforms that were forced on us by the IMF in 1976 the roots of our own economic revival today.

The more enlightened elements of the Korean government already see their own national humiliation much in this light. For

them there is a silver lining to the crisis, because it allows for the introduction of necessary economic and structural reform while being able firmly to blame it all on the forces of American imperialism. Neat.

There is an important argument against what the IMF is doing, however, which is the argument used against all forms of development aid. Far from helping the situation, such support only accentuates it, the argument goes, by providing a cushion and slowing the necessary process of catharsis and rebirth. There is something in this, though in the case of a large economy like Korea, it needs to be carefully weighed against the likely economic damage to the West if we were to allow events to take their own course. The possibility that things could turn against the West politically if Korea were allowed to go to the wall also needs to be taken into account.

It is human nature always to avert a crisis where it is possible to do so, a tendency learnt from the generally brutal short-term consequences of allowing things to reach the meltdown stage. But it may be that we would have done better to leave well alone. By any standards this was a massive bailout. It is all very well pouring money into ensuring that the merry-go-round carries on turning, but it is not at all clear that the world can afford these massive infusions of cash. The IMF has yet to get its money back from the last bailout, Mexico. This latest raft of rescues tests the international purse strings to their limits.

Western equity markets have meanwhile begun to behave as if the crisis in the Far

East never happened. Both the FTSE 100 index in London and the Dow in New York are back to within spitting distance of their all-time highs. Many have lost more money on the bounce than the original drop. This can be taken as evidence either of a remarkable degree of resilience in Western economies to events elsewhere in the world, or of a quite breathtaking complacency. Unfortunately, I am unable to offer an opinion on which of these views is the more likely to be correct. Things have defied gravity for so long now, that it may be this has become the natural way of the world.

Merging Swiss Bank Corporation with Union Bank of Switzerland makes such obvious commercial sense that it is a wonder it has taken the two so long to start talking. The potential for cost savings in regional, private and investment banking make the benefits of combining NatWest and Barclays look pedestrian by comparison.

However, there's another way of looking at it. Putting together SBC Warburg with UBS Phillips and Drew will mean big job losses in the City and the disappearance of yet another competitive force in equity trading and corporate finance. We've already had in short order the sale and consolidation of the equity businesses of both NatWest Markets and BZW. Now another big player, UBS, is about to join them in the dustbin of history. Isn't it about time the competition authorities took a look at whether the investing public is being disadvantaged by this banking carve up?

## Ionica crisis mounts as breach in banking covenants looms

The problems circling Ionica, the troubled wireless phones operator, deepened yesterday after it emerged that the group had warned its main lenders that it expected to breach its banking covenants. Chris Godsmark and Michael Harrison report on Ionica's spectacular plunge in fortunes.

Ionica has told its bankers that it will be unlikely to meet the challenging obligations in a £300m loan agreement signed in June, a month before the group's £640m flotation.

To meet the covenants, Ionica must have 195,000 residential phone customers by the end of next year and be able to offer a service to 3.8 million homes. It currently has just 31,000 subscribers and covers 1.65 million households.

The agreement also stipulates that the company must achieve minimum revenues of £19.2m between October and December 1998. The group has pioneered technology in England and Wales which uses wireless signals from ariels on homes to by-pass British Telecom's residential network.

Sources close to the discussions said though Ionica would not need the funds until next year, it was "unlikely" to meet the obligations. Talks to renegotiate the loans are expected to begin next Spring, when the company is clearer about whether it can solve a series of technological problems, though the banks are likely to impose even more onerous conditions on the loans. A spokesman said the company talked to its banks "all the time" and its business case was unaltered.

These setbacks have spawned a City nightmare as the shares, floated in July at 390p and which briefly touched 399p, crashed over the past few weeks to little more than £1, wiping almost £500m from the company's market value. Yesterday they fell another 5p to 102.5p, after one investor sold 660,000 shares at just 95p.

Nigel Playford, Ionica's senior

but embattled chief executive and founder, has embarked on a City offensive to the nerves of investors and analysts. But its shareholders, who include the Boots chairman Lord Blyth and a phalanx of big companies led by Yorkshire Electric, must be wondering when the rot will stop.

Analysts also remain sceptical. Mark Lambert, from Merrill Lynch said: "Their covenants are tied to certain operating targets which are likely to be more difficult to achieve." Mark Lambert.

He pointed to the brief trading record of a company which only began its service last year. "Investing in young companies always carried additional risks. Unfortunately in this case many of those risks have materialised."

Privately other analysts are much less complimentary. One said that Mr Playford's position at the helm should be seriously questioned, though few expect him to step down, not least of Ionica's reputation as a one-man company.

"This is a woeful tale of management inadequacy and incompetence," said another. "I don't think I have ever seen a share price drop in the way Ionica's has and you have to wonder who is going to have the courage to call the bottom of the market and start buying them again."

Mr Playford's grip on day-to-day operations has already been weakened by the appointment last month of Mike Biden, a former BT executive, to work alongside him as chief operating officer. "This is a classic move for a telecoms company in difficulties," said one analyst. "You poach someone from BT who should know how to run things. Whether it will work out that way is another matter."

But the small print in Ionica's flotation prospectus points to another reason to retain Mr Playford, who is paid a £250,000 salary. Apart from a three-year notice period if his contract is terminated, the documents show he can only be asked to resign as a director if he owns less than 5 million Ionica shares. He currently holds twice that number, giving him about 5 per cent of the company.

The crisis is a far cry from Mr Playford's exuberant mood over the summer. One morning in

early June, as he sat in the boardroom of Ionica's Cambridge headquarters surrounded by piles of ring-bound documents entitled "Introduction to the London Stock Exchange," he enthused about the company's plans to take on BT in the domestic telephone market with its innovative radio-based technology.

"This business exists to keep shareholders, employees, customers and, to some extent, the Government happy. So far we are keeping them all happy simultaneously. I can't see any shareholders being interested in selling out until our dream comes true," he said.

For weeks after the float whippers in the City had suggested the opposite, with suspicions that Ionica's innovative technology had hit serious problems. But the scale of the difficulties stunned investors, as last month the company admitted to a list of technical and operational setbacks.

The base stations in some areas have already been swamped by demand, hitting capacity constraints. Worse still, new software to boost call capacity from Nortel, one of the world's largest equipment makers and Ionica's technology partner, will not appear until next May.

On top of this analysts were stunned to hear that many of Ionica's customers who flocked to join the service had turned into credit risks. Disconnections have soared, while many prospective subscribers have been rejected because of low credit ratings.

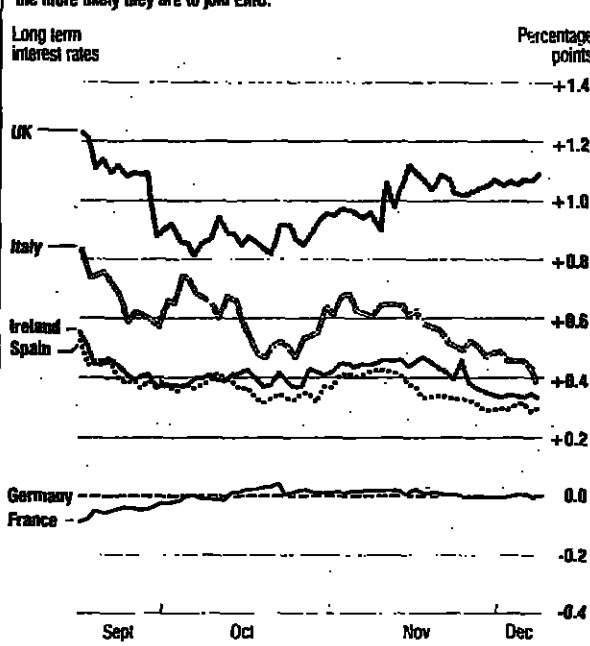
Yesterday Ionica quietly extended its service to 191,000 homes in Sheffield and Rotherham. But it has simultaneously been forced to stop marketing to homes in parts of East Anglia, the first region to gain a service, because capacity at base stations has run out.

Back in June, it did not appear as if anything could dent Ionica's prospects. Surveying the landscape, Mr Playford said he could not spot any obvious disaster waiting to happen. "When we started in 1992 we have no technology, no money, no staff, no customers, no interconnection and no number portability. Now we can tick every one of those and if we do no more than we are doing now we will do fantastically well."

He also made the now hollow-sounding pledge that Ionica would not repeat the mistakes of so many of the cable companies that had gone from shooting stars to basket cases within months of flotation. "The reason shares in the cable operators have done so badly is that they made promises they have not been able to keep," he said.

### Who will be in EMU? The financial markets' view

The closer other countries get to the dashed baseline (Germany) the more likely they are to join EMU.



TOWARDS EMU: If the line moves towards the German base line it means investors no longer require such a high premium for holding that country's bonds compared to German ones, because they are confident the currency won't devalue against the mark. In other words, they think that country will be locked into a single currency with Germany in 10 years time.

AWAY FROM EMU: However, if they think the country won't be in EMU, that it will have higher inflation, and that there is a risk of a future devaluation against the mark, then they will demand an extra premium for holding that country's bonds, so the line will move away from the base.

### When will EMU start? The City Analysts' View.

The Independent asked analysts from Nikko Europe, Paine Webber, ABN Amro, JP Morgan, Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, Salomon Brothers, Goldman Sachs, HSBC James Capel, UBS what probability they placed on EMU starting on time.

Probability EMU starts on time:	81%	(81% last week)
Probability EMU is delayed:	15%	(15% last week)
Probability EMU never happens:	4%	(4% last week)

## Footsie rebounds after jitters on Wall St at strong job figures

Stronger than expected US jobs data sent the FTSE tumbling yesterday on fears of plunges in the Dow. But the sell-off in Wall Street failed to materialise, and the FTSE rebounded strongly to close at 5142.9, up 60.6. Leo Paterson reports on a volatile day in the financial markets.

The US economy is going from strength to strength, according to employment data released yesterday. Non-farm payrolls leapt by 404,000 in November, the biggest one-month increase since February 1996, and almost double the number markets had anticipated.

The unexpectedly strong figures put traders on red alert in the early afternoon. The Dow was expected to plunge by 100 points at market opening. 2.30pm GMT. Nervous UK dealers began selling off shares prior to Wall Street's opening, sending the FTSE tumbling from 5,148.7 just before midday to 5,047.9 at 1.45pm.

But US dealers held their

nerve, and shares in New York remained firm on speculation that the employment data would not persuade the US Federal Reserve to raise interest rates.

The strong US stock market prompted a rebound in the FTSE in late afternoon trade. The FTSE closed at 5142.9, 60.6 up on the day.

The US payrolls rise brought November's unemployment rate down by 0.1 per cent to 4.6 per cent, the lowest since October 1975. Experts had expected unemployment to rise to 4.8 per cent.

Market jitters are likely to continue until the Fed decides US interest rates later this month. But many US dealers are expecting rates to remain on hold, at least for the time being. There is still evidence of deflation in US manufacturing, and increases in productivity are helping rein in US labour costs. Investors switching funds out of the bond market also helped push US equities higher yesterday, dealers said.

US interest rate watchers will be watching US retail sales data, and producer price data, both scheduled for release next week. "With calm markets else-

## EMU boost from German growth figures

German GDP figures released earlier this week could mean that EMU gets off to a smooth start, according to *The Independent's* panel of experts. The data showed German economic growth was still heavily reliant on a buoyant export sector. But domestic demand remained relatively weak.

According to Robert Lind of ABN Amro, the figures make it less likely the Bundesbank will raise German interest rates again. The last German rate rise was badly received in France. The Bank of France followed the Bundesbank lead and increased rates, despite government concern about unemployment.

"The risks to monetary union are political, not economic," commented Julian Jessop of Nikko Europe.

The re-election on Tuesday of pro-European Oskar Lafontaine as leader of the German opposition has also boosted EMU's chances of starting on time, according to Mr Jessop. "We are thinking of revising our probability [of EMU starting on time] upwards," he said yesterday.

Mr Lafontaine's main rival is Eurosceptic Gerhard Schröder, currently Prime Minister of Lower Saxony. Following this week's vote, Mr Schröder is less likely to emerge as the Opposition's challenger to Chancellor Kohl in next September's federal elections.

## Courts warns on impact of strong pound

Courts, the international furniture and electrical retailer, warned that the impact of the strong pound would have a greater effect in the second half of the financial year as it unveiled a 1.6 per cent rise in profits for the first six months.

For the six months to September it made £9.71m, up from £9.56m, on a 16.6 per cent increase in turnover from continuing operations to £210m from £180m. The company proposed a dividend of 1.05p, up 5 per cent. If September 1996 exchange rates from had been used to translate the half-year's figures, turnover would have been higher by £14.1m and pre-tax profits by £1.3m.

## BOC man quits

The president of BOC Gases Americas and chairman and chief executive of BOC Process Plants and Cryostat, Seffi Ghasemi, has quit, industrial gases group BOC said yesterday. In a statement, Mr Ghasemi said he was leaving because he wanted the chance to run a company in his own right. BOC said it expected to announce Mr Ghasemi's replacement and other organisational changes in the near future.

## Carpet businesses sold

Household goods group Readicut International is selling its UK and Dutch carpet businesses for £30m. The company also reported a 36 per cent increase in its pre-tax profits to £4.5m in six months to September 30. Readicut said it was selling the businesses to Interface Europe Ltd and Interface Europe BV, subsidiaries of US group Interface Inc. The company said it was also planning to sell its American carpet and UK yarn spinning businesses. The sale of these units were still being negotiated. The combined value of its yarn spinning and carpet businesses is expected to be more than £50m.

## Cable TV dispute settled

Cable & Wireless Communications, the UK's biggest cable operator, has settled its dispute with Channel One. The pair were due to go to the High Court next week over CWC's exclusion of Channel One from its cheapest package of channels. CWC said yesterday that, although Channel One would not be included in its Headstart basic package, it would provide the channel with guaranteed revenue and would run promotions to encourage subscribers to take packages that did include Channel One.

A similar disagreement also broke out between NTL, the cable operator, and Live TV, the channel owned by Mirror Group. CWC and Channel One had two preliminary court hearings before deciding to settle ahead of next week's appearance. Headstart offers a telephone line and a small number of cable channels for £11.99 a month.

## Betterware approach

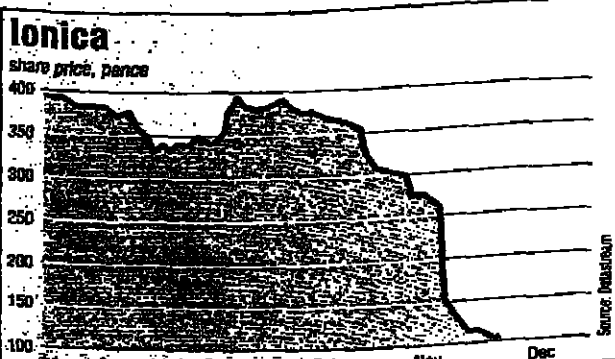
Betterware, the catalogue household products group, has received an approach from two of its senior executives that could lead to a takeover bid at a "small premium" to its current market value of about £100m.

The approach has come from managing director Peter Hartley and finance director Paul Turner, who have formed a company backed by NatWest Equity Partners. Shares in the Birmingham-based company jumped 4.5p to 102p after the news emerged, adding to the 10 per cent rise on Thursday.

## Greene King profits up

Pre-tax profits at Greene King, the brewer and pub operator, rose 54 per cent to £20.7m from £13.4m, boosted by the acquisition of the Magic Pub group, which it bought in July 1996. The operator of Hungry Horse and King's Foyre pubs and brewer of Greene King and Abbot Ale said earnings per share adjusted for one-off items rose 13 per cent to 23.7p and pre-tax profit rose 26 per cent to £19.1m.

Greene King's Magic Pub acquisition drove operating profit growth, at a time when rival pub operators have reported pressure on profits because of competition and the need to spend heavily to meet consumers' taste for themed and branded pubs.



### COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Ashtree Group (Q)	1.93m (0.732m)	0.229m (0.079m)	0.7p (0.2p)	-
Coates (Q)	210.26m (178.1m)	9.71m (5.6m)	7.46p (4.7p)	1.05p (1.0p)
Greene King (Q)	132.1m (107.8m)	20.7m (13.4m)	26.7p (18.9p)	5.3p (4.75p)
Lambert (Q)	1.50m (0.972m)	0.391m (0.340m)	6.7p (5.1p)	2.2p (-)
London Cable (Q)	85.7m (84.24m)	14.31m (18.9m)	8.9p (8.9p)	2.65p (2.65p)
Phylpharm (Q)	0.045m (0.034m)	3.00m (0.305m)	9.92p (2.54p)	-

(Q) - First (Q) - interim (EPS is pre-exceptional) (Dividend to be paid as a FID)

# 26/THE BIG PICTURE



Northern lights: Stirling Castle bathed in the illumination of a new state-of-the-art floodlight system, installed at a cost of almost £500,000 and switched on for the first time last night. The lights feature dramatic effects inside the castle as well as playing on the textures and shadows of the walls that have witnessed many key episodes in Scotland's history. This photograph, by Lesley Donald, was taken with a 24mm lens, 1/5th of a second at f5.6, on Fuji 400 Asa film.

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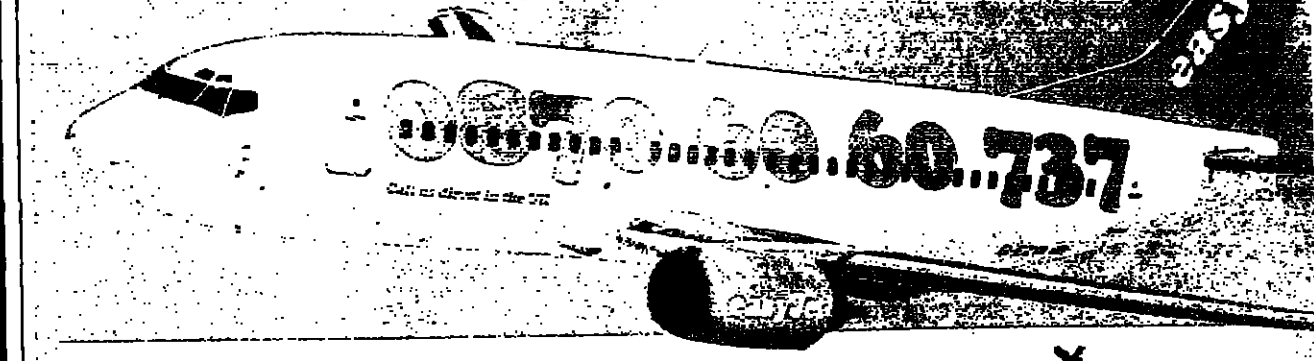
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### THE INDEPENDENT

The Independent in association with easyJet are giving you the opportunity to fly to Geneva before Christmas for just £9 each way. This is to celebrate the launch of easyJet's new route to Geneva, flying from London Luton.

You can fly for just £9 each way. The offer price is for flights between 16 and 22 December 1997 inclusive. There are 500 single seats available - that's 250 returns.

GENEVA The beautiful city of Geneva lies on the banks of the largest lake in Central Europe at the foot of the Jura mountains. Its charm and privileged location makes Geneva a popular destination all year round.

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HOW TO BOOK The booking number is 0870 601 0072 and you must book your flight between 10am and 6pm today only. Prices exclude airport tax. Tax from the UK is £10, from Geneva it is £7.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. There are 500 single seats available for Geneva. This represents 250 returns. They will be sold on a first come first served basis. Bookings are made subject to availability.

2. Neither easyJet or Newspaper Publishing plc can be held responsible for callers who cannot get through to the booking line.

3. There is a maximum of 5 passengers per booking and a maximum of one booking per household.

4. The booking line (0870 601 0072) will be open today between 10am and 6pm only. You can book your flights by telephoning this number today between these hours.

5. Passengers under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Infants aged 23 months or less - determined by the age on the date of travel - can travel free of charge on condition that they share the same seat of travel as the adult accompanying them. Only one infant may accompany each adult.

6. Passengers are responsible for paying applicable airport and local government taxes including Air Passenger Duty which is £10 from the UK and £7 from Geneva. Passengers are responsible for obtaining and possessing (if appropriate) valid passports, visas and insurance. It is strongly recommended that passengers take out insurance. All passengers travelling on international flights must have a valid 10 year passport and necessary visas.

7. All bookings issued are non transferable and non refundable.

8. All outward and return travel must be taken between 16 December and 22 December 1997 inclusive.

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# TIME

TRAVEL, LEISURE & SPORT

Saturday 6 December 1997



David Nardini/TCL

## Thai dive: waving, not drowning

Going on a diving course is like acquiring a passport to a different, magical and painfully fragile world, as Rhianon Batten found out off an island in Thailand.

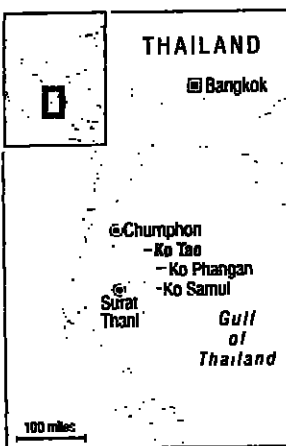
That first step off the side of the boat, heart thumping as I hit the water and the weight of the scuba gear dragging me into the water, was probably the most memorable I've ever taken.

One moment I was balancing clumsily on the deck of the boat - eyes fixed on the horizon, hands pressing mask to face, the sound of breathing gurgling in my ears - the next I had splashed down under the water alone, silent, and weightless.

Slowly my fellow divers plunged in and joined me. We were surrounded by subdued colour and shape and the mumbled munching of fish. Coral with velvety purple sacks spilled out soft, wafting tendrils to tickle the pretty flecked back of a passing ray. Pairs of

bannerfish with long graceful tails swept through shoals of shiny pink and yellow fish. This was the first time I had scuba dived and I knew as soon as I jumped that I was hooked.

Back above the water, a few days earlier, the pastel-coloured boat bobbing across to the island of Ko Tao, off the east coast of Thailand, had been packed with noisy tourists, all pushing hard to sell their dive schools. We decided on Planet Scuba dive school partly because it was one of the few that employed no touts. There



were other considerations - they had a shop in town that was right next door to the local happy hour bar, the Safety Stop.

If they do not already have a scuba diving qualification, most visitors to Ko Tao take the four-day PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) Open Water course for beginners. This is a mixture of classroom lessons and practical instruction. You begin in the shallows of a swimming pool, where people like me can safely panic underwater and splutter their way to the surface, then

move on to the offshore dive sites.

Once you've mastered the PADI slogans and grappled with the scuba equipment practice, drills are a doddle. It's all pretty straightforward - putting on and taking off equipment, carrying out safety checks, practising what to do if you run out of air underwater (no one ever found themselves in this situation for real) and general underwater health and safety.

The best thing about the course is that the more dives

continued on page 2

### INSIDE

CITY BREAKS  
48 hours in  
Havana/5

SKIING  
Up, up and  
over the  
pistes/6

KNOWING...  
Alan Partridge's  
Norwich 8/9

### SPORT

WORLD CUP  
Hoddle: luck of  
the draw/24

Sepp Blatter:  
FIFA's Mr Fixit/24

RETURN OF  
THE HEROES  
Bjorn Borg v  
McEnroe/21

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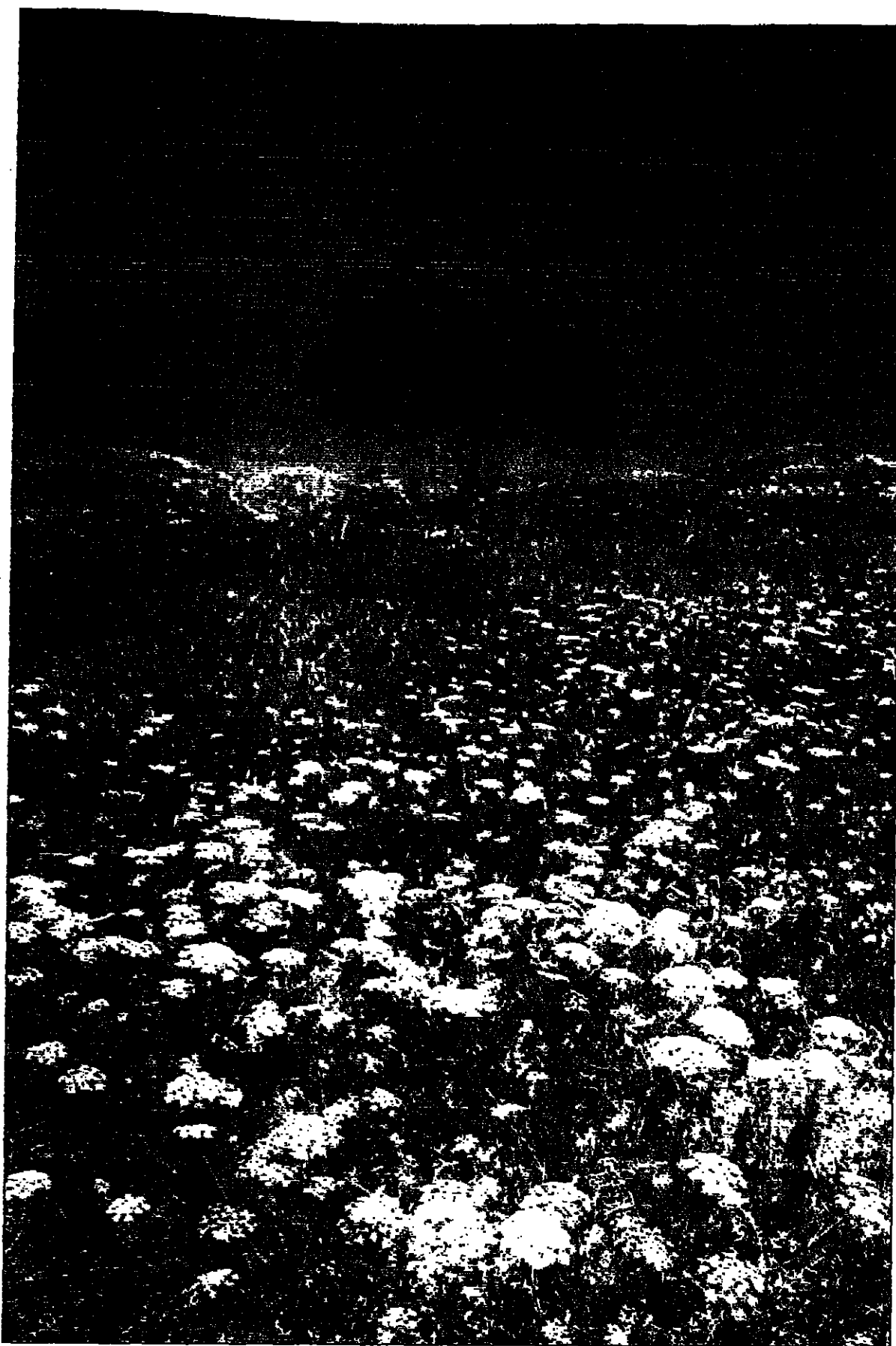








SIMON CALDER



## Spain: get the picture?

An Andalusian holiday with a focus sounded a perfect combination. Rupert Sagar-Musgrave set out to capture it all on camera.

The idea of a working holiday appealed. Nothing so strenuous as a kibbutz, or helping replant trees in the rainforest. That would be too much like hard work. No, why not extend my own area of work with a holiday? As a semi-professional photographer, a workshop at Los Pinos, the only English-run photography centre in Spain, seemed to combine the perfect ingredients. If you are one of those people who annoys everybody else by spending hours trying to get the perfect shot, then this is the holiday for you – and nobody will complain. I dusted off my lenses, invested in a mountain of film, and arrived in Andalusia for a holiday that I could finally justify.

By the time I surfaced on the first morning, the group was already getting acquainted over coffee in the library. This was not to be a holiday for the leisurely. Having disturbed my roommate by stumbling in at 3am, due to a "delay of inbound aircraft" at Gatwick, I now headed for the only familiar face among the group and apologised. Norman had flown in from Brussels and this was his second holiday here, which seemed to be just the sort of active recommendation that a newcomer needed.

Los Pinos, as the name suggests, is peacefully situated among pine trees on the edge of the Sierra Almorja, close to Competa. As I wandered through the garden towards the library, the view stretched away down the Torrox valley to the Mediterranean, the Costas, and beyond to the Rif Mountains of North Africa. The warm breeze was scented with pine and wild rosemary.

Each course caters for groups of up to 15 people, though ours was a very manageable seven. We spanned all ages and professions, from a therapist in her late twenties, to a middle-aged accountant, and a retired expatriate. The only common factor was a keen personal ambition to improve our photographic capabilities.

The guest host for our workshop, the landscape photographer Michael Busselle, gave an introductory talk, accompanied by his own slides to illustrate the theme for the week: "Colour landscape with a travel bias". The essence of the holiday was to spend the next six days exploring the enormous diversity of locations in the surrounding region, known enigmatically as Axarquía. Our subject matter was some-

times planned, sometimes just chanced upon. It was an experience of discovery, for nowhere looks the same twice, under changing skies and mercurial light.

Preconceptions can lead to disappointment but Andalusia matched up to the idyllic images conjured in my mind. *Pueblos blancos*, barren mountains, pots of geraniums, a goat herder tending his flock, a single olive tree surrounded by a carpet of purple flowers. "You want to put a warm-up filter on this one," Michael enthused, weaving through the obstacle course of tripods as the group congregated around yet another olive tree. Why is it that olive trees are so fascinating? Perhaps

again for their cameras, plastic plates and cups being tossed aside, before returning for a slice of watermelon.

The days were long. Sometimes we would stop to drop off films for processing at a shopping development down by the sea on our return to Los Pinos. The heavy traffic on the coastal road made a stark contrast to the now familiar deserted mountain tracks. But with cameras stowed and bodies weary, the only thing on our minds by late evening was supper. A small decanter of the local Competa wine was always kept topped up in my log-cabin room, which served as a welcome aperitif before we reconvened for a feast of tra-



In the frame: the landscape of Andalusia is as varied as it is photogenic  
Photographer: Rupert Sagar-Musgrave

ditional dishes superbly prepared each night by Sophia. This proved quite literally to be the driving force for us all.

The centre provides a relaxed environment for a photographic holiday. When it came to an open critique of the group's work on the final day, the results were impressive to say the least. Feedback is an integral part of the learning experience and sharing ideas with the other participants was equally beneficial.

Of course the degree of attendance and thus personal progress during the week is up to you. Just don't expect to improve your shots with a siesta by the pool.

Los Pinos runs workshops from February to November, hosted by some of the best known names in British photography. Prices start at £450 for one week. The nearest airport is Malaga, transfer time approximately one hour. For further details tel/fax 01386 841715 (UK), or tel/fax 0034 52 11 5355 (Spain).

### PICTURE THIS

A combination of clear air, abundance of wilderness and the sun low on the horizon make midsummer in Newfoundland ideal for nature photography. Photo Travellers (01483 425448) includes the island in its programme of escorted photography courses. The two-week course takes place in July and costs £1,995. Other subjects for 1998 include Costa Rica, South India, US National Parks and walking in Provence.

The surreal scenery and wild coastline of County Clare is the setting for a series of art holidays run by the Burren College of Art (00 353 65 77200). The college is spectacularly located on the edge of the Burren just south of Ballyvaughan, on the west coast of Ireland, and offers courses on painting, drawing and photography. A botanical painting week in May costs £150, while a Beginning Photography weekend course is £75. Accommodation is extra, costing around £30 per day for full board.

Dillington House (01460 52427), near Chard in Somerset, is a council-run residential college offering weekend courses from October to June on all sorts of arts and crafts, including calligraphy and Japanese silk painting.

The ultimate contemporary guide for an artistic holiday in Spain must be the writer Michael Jacobs. He will be escorting a tour of Toledo and Madrid in April and October

next year, on behalf of Martin Randall Travel (0181-742 3355). The five-night holiday costs £845, with a single supplement of £70. The group size is limited to a maximum of 22. The same company arranges private visits to the Sistine Chapel (a privilege enjoyed yesterday by the Cuban President's brother, Raul Castro), as part of some of its tours to Italy.

The new Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao is included on a Spanish itinerary from ACE Study Tours (01223 835055) in May; a week costs £875. The company is also running a summer tour of Finnish art and architecture. Besides Helsinki, the trip includes visits to the timber town of Porvoo and the city of Turku.

In south-western France, a British-run visual studies centre called Atelier de la Rose (00 33 5 65 24 66 36) offers summer schooling in drawing, painting and photography. Non-participating partners can stay free of charge.

The thoroughly updated 1998 Painting Holiday Directory is published on Monday, price £4.75 including postage. It is available from some bookshops or direct from PHD Publications, PO Box 1, Ponteland, Newcastle NE19 2EB (01830 540215).

Simon Calder

### RED CHANNEL

A compendium of hazards facing today's traveller. This week: safety tips for visitors to Budapest – as supplied by the Gellert Hotel to its guests.

- Never leave your handbag unattended in the breakfast room or hotel restaurant, even when you go over to the buffet table.
- Do not take all your money with you when you go for a walk. Carry your purse or wallet as close to your body as possible – preferably in an inside pocket that closes with a zipper.
- Always keep your handbag or shoulder bag closed and hold it towards the front of your body so that it cannot easily be snatched away from you.
- Remember: even a locked boot and a secured parking place are not a guarantee that no one will break into your car.
- If you drink alcohol you are not allowed to drive.

For foreign office advice on Hungary and many other countries, contact the Travel Advice Unit on 0171-238 4503 or 4504, or fax 0171-238 4545; on the Internet, at <http://www.fco.gov.uk> or on BBC-2 Ceefax from page 470 onwards.

### GREEN CHANNEL

If you eat organic food in the air (as you do on Swissair flights) are you being environmentally-friendly? Well ... even accounting for the environmental benefits of organic farming, air travel is increasing at such a dramatic rate that unfortunately no amount of organic sandwiches will stop the damage aeroplanes are causing in terms of climate change.

As more and more of us get a taste for the delights of travel (there are likely to be 1.6 billion of us exploring the globe by 2020), carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions from aircraft are escalating. Friends of the Earth point out that despite technological improvements making aircraft "greener", by 2015 planes are expected to double their current contribution of 3.5 per cent of the global greenhouse effect and could cause half of the annual destruction of the ozone layer.

But, as anyone who has compared rail and air travel prices to Ireland, Paris or Brussels will know, air is often cheaper. All but the richest environmentalists are consequently deterred from choosing rail over plane on short-haul journeys. And when it is cheaper to fly to the Caribbean than it is to fly to Europe it is no surprise that long-haul travel is booming.

The answer? It may not be a popular one, but Friends of the Earth suggests putting tax on air tickets, aircraft fuel and transport of goods by air – if car drivers pay tax on petrol, why should air travel be exempt?

As world leaders debate climate change this week and next at the UN Convention on Climate Change in Kyoto, the role of air travel should undoubtedly be considered. Friends of the Earth will be demonstrating at airports world-wide this weekend, campaigning for "The Right Price for Air Travel". For the traveller, it's a bitter pill to swallow, as it will increase the price of our holidays, but it's likely to do more to save the world than eating organic food on aircraft will ever do.

Sue Wheat

TOMORROW IN THE SEVEN-SECTION

## INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



### What do Tony, Dolly, and Saddam have in common? Find out tomorrow

PLUS:

The Tatton Terrors – Neil and Christine Hamilton invite you into their lovely home

Sun Hill Superstars – the unusual suspects who have done their time in *The Bill*

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# 4/OUTINGS

## Among the chattering classes

Hey, hey with the monkeys – or at least the lemurs, capuchins and orang-utans. David Wilson visits Monkey World, in Dorset

The first thing you see in the 40-acre woodland park of Monkey World is a colony of lemurs. On the day we were there they were sprawling on their backs in the sunshine and displaying their long, bushy tails. They looked as if they'd just had a wild party.

When feeding-time comes they start to get frisky. During our visit, a male called Chewy dived out of his cage, dangled by one arm from an oak tree, then dropped to the ground and snuggled up to a member of our group.

A keeper squirted water to shoo him away. Chewy then started dancing with a



female lemur, mirroring her movements. They grappled delicately, exchanging little kicks and cuffs. Meanwhile his tribe launched into a chorus like nothing we'd ever heard: a croaking roar that conjured up visions of the jungles of Madagascar. Thrilling.

The sanctuary's other species are less anarchic, more under control; but they by no means resemble prisoners. They seem at ease in their enclosures. Very few show any signs of stress: no pacing, twitching or despondent brooding. The reason is that, as the keepers emphasise, every primate gets treated as an individual.

Many have been rescued from frightening predicaments. The macaques came from a laboratory where they were used in contraceptive testing. One of them, Shaky, tends to tremble as a result. Her compan-

ions looked more robust as they waded their big, pink behinds to attract the male – who yawned, displaying his fangs.

The keeper interpreted: "He's telling me 'Stay away from my harem ...' and quite honestly he's welcome to them."

The slender capuchins are more approachable. One was rescued in Rolf Harris's *Animal Hospital*. Amazingly, in America they themselves are sometimes employed as nurses for paralysed people, performing such tasks as feeding and lifting the telephone.

Above all, what we sensed in the straw-sweetened air of Monkey World was the tenderness of primates. The two orang-utans, Ami and Banji, sat locked in a seemingly interminable embrace that made us a touch misty-eyed.

By contrast the male chimps displayed vigour and machismo. They somersaulted and beat their chests. One of their enclosures, a pyramid structure, was built by the *Challenge Anneka* team in just three days.

As well as the living attractions the centre also features a climbing-net where children keenly mimic the monkeys. Any-one needing still more stimulation may try the mini-motorbikes, slides, swings and assault course.

### The visitors

Suzy Bell from Kensington, south west London, took her children, Lucy, seven, and William, five.

**Suzy:** To be honest, to begin with I wasn't particularly interested in the trip. I had the impression that monkeys are grim and ugly creatures. But I really got into it. We'd planned to spend two hours. In the end we were there for four. It's just the right size.

I didn't realise monkeys had such human faces, and yet all that fur. It's eerie. I found the orang-utans incredibly graceful, as if they were moving in slow motion. They're also very gentle – an example to us all.

I thought all the staff were charming, and of course Chewy was adorable. I wanted to take him home. I wonder why there's so much stress on the chimps. In the advertising and on the T-shirts and so on. There's more to the place than that.



Planet of the apes: as the keepers emphasise, every primate gets treated as an individual

Photographs: John Lawrence

**Lucy:** I watch lots of nature programmes. Normally they have monkeys in them. I liked the monkey [a capuchin] that can look after you when you're older. Granny should have one.

I also liked Chewy. He looked like he was wearing a cardigan. His tongue was very soft. Gibbons are pretty – all fluffy and cuddly – or was it orang-utans?

We bought a toy monkey to go with my penguin, Pip. I'd like a real monkey. Mummy says we can't.

**William:** The best bit was Chewy. I wanted to cuddle Chewy. I have seen lions. Monkeys are nicer than lions. Monkey World is more fun than a museum. Chimpanzees are scary, though.

### The deal

**Getting there:** Monkey World is in Longthorns, near Wareham, Dorset (freephone 0800 456000). By car it is a few miles north of the A352 between Wool and Wareham; by train it is a £3 taxi each way (0800 666 066) from Wool station.

**Opening times:** daily, 10am-5pm. **Admission:** £4.75 adults, £2.75 children, £3.25 senior citizens and disabled, £13 family ticket (two adults and two children).

**Support:** you can adopt a primate and receive its photograph, an adoption certificate, *The Ape Rescue Chronicle*, and a free one-year season ticket to Monkey World. For information on the campaign to save chimps from BSE experiments, contact Monkey World.

### PITSTOP

A few miles away from Monkey World you can stop for refreshments and a view of the brooding ruins of Corfe Castle. The National Trust Tea Room (01929 481332) at The Square, Corfe Castle, serves coffee and various cakes (from 11am, then at lunch time come home-made soup (always vegetarian), sandwiches, quiche and salad, and filled jacket potatoes, as well as a few hot specials. Choices for afternoon tea include the Dorset cream tea with local home-made jam, and the Purbeck tea comprising two slices of locally baked bread, jam and a choice of cakes. There's a roast on Sundays, and they're happy to cater for young children, with two high-chairs, children's cups, bottles, small portions and a short children's menu.

From the Egon Ronay guide *'And Children Come Too ...'*, Bookman, £9.99

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صلى الله عليه وسلم





## 48 hours in the heart of Havana

**For a short cut to the soul of the Cuban capital, Michael Williams offers a guide.**

### Why go now?

Because the finest Spanish colonial city on earth is shining more brightly this December than for a decade. Because you no longer have to fly via Gander or East Berlin to get there. And, who knows, after four decades of revolution, it really could be Fidel Castro's last Christmas...

### Beam down

Cubana (0171-734 1165) flies three times a week from Gatwick, using a DC-10. A fortnight from today it begins flying weekly from Manchester. Fares are high: around £500, including taxes. But you could also find a package tour, staying in the best hotels for around the same price. Be prepared for your flight to stop at Brussels, taking the journey time up to 12 hours. Taxis at the airport cost around £10 into town.

### Check in

After a trip like that, you don't want to be scouring the darkened streets of Old Havana for somewhere to stay. So try to book in advance. The budget option is the perennially cheerful and grotty Caribbean (0053 7 62 2071) on the Prado. The smarter and more atmospher-

ic Plaza (00 53 7 62 2066) or Inglaterra (00 53 7 62 7072) on Parque Central, the main square, cost around £60 double. Top of the range is the new Hotel Santa Isabel, just opened in a converted palace on the lavishly restored Plaza de Armas (00 537 33 8201). It costs around £90 for two.

### Get your bearings

You could easily spend a week, let alone a weekend, in the conspiratorial confines of Old Havana. But to see how it fits into the Revolutionary scheme of the whole, take a trip out to the western district of Miramar (where, pre-1959, the Mafia community hung out) and see the Model of the City, housed in a hangar on Calle 28 between Avenidas 1 and 3. An amazingly detailed wooden model gives an excellent overview of the entire capital, with each century colour coded to give an idea of the development of Havana.

### Take a ride

Almost anything that moves in Havana can be construed as a taxi. But from an aesthetic point of view, a pre-1959 American saloon (of which there are hundreds prowling the streets) is the only way to travel. You can pick up a dawgster of Detroit around Parque Central or near the railway station. Fix your price with the driver first.

**Literary interlude**  
While you are queueing (get

used to Cuban queues) for immigration, or changing money, or simply waiting to be served in a cafe, re-read Graham Greene's *Our Man In Havana*. This comic tale of the vacuum cleaner salesman turned spy is the perfect evocation of the Havana mood - the steamy heat, the sleaze and that indefinable sense of political danger. It was written in 1958, but half-close your eyes and it could just be happening in 1997.

### Take a hike

From the main square, go east along Calle O'Reilly through deliciously complex layers of colonialism, Communism and community. Promenade around the Plaza de Armas, nod in the direction of Ernest Hemingway at the Ambos Mundos hotel (and toll the bell that stands opposite), then return along Calle Obispo. When you reach the main square at the end, loop back along Calle Obrapia. You can keep this up all morning, turning up all manner of curiosities - and being hissed at once per block by someone offering cheap cigars - or a girl.

### Lunch on the run

Havana is not a great city for people who lunch. Best bet is to stoke up on the lavish hotel breakfasts, though this year for the first time a fast-food industry has emerged from the doorways of Old Havana and its seedier western neighbour, Cen-

tral Havana. You can get a slab of pizza in brown paper and an ice-cream for eight pesos (30p).

### Cultural afternoon

Fidel will be pleased if you call in at the Presidential Palace. Not his heavily guarded HQ, of course, but the residence of the dictator he deposed - Fulgencio Batista. This has become the Museum of the Revolution, repository of the heritage of Che Guevara and his *compañeros*. You can see not only such revolutionary essentials as Che's socks and his mistress's handbag, but also, in the gardens outside, the mangled wreckage of an American U2 spy plane shot down during the Cuban missile crisis.

### Window shopping

Cuba is the perfect destination for shopaholics to go cold turkey. You are free to browse, presupposing you can find a shop with (a) windows, that aren't concealed by grubby net curtains, or (b) anything you might want in it. You will be offered countless cigars, but to avoid duds wait until you get to the airport on the way home. A good bet for a souvenir is to head for the quirky second-hand book market on Plaza de Armas, or some old postcards of historic Havana from the Office of the City Historian at the bottom of Calle Obispo.

### An aperitif

"My daiquiri in El Floridita," Hemingway was fond of saying. But in the Fifties, it wasn't the priciest bar in Havana: now it charges more for a cocktail than the average Cuban earns in a week. Instead, head for the raucous La Lluvia del Oro, halfway down Obispo. You won't miss it, because of the blast of salsa thumping through the door.

### Demure dinner

Most restaurants serve dreary, standardised fare. Not surprising, since they are generally run by the state. But since 1994, entrepreneurs have been able to open private restaurants, *palacetes*, provided they don't seat more than 12 people. A good place to go is La Moneda, serving delicious fish with salad, beans and rice with fried banana for less than £5 a head. It is at San Ignacio 77, near the cathedral, but get there early - there are only three tables.



Steamy heat, sleaze and that indefinable sense of political danger: Havana today could have come straight off the pages of Graham Greene's famous novel

Photographs: Tom Pilsten

### A night at the opera

Chris Smith may think he's on to a good thing by reinventing Covent Garden as "the people's opera". But Fidel got there first: £7.50 will buy you the best seat in the house at the Gran Teatro de la Habana, which claims to be the oldest working theatre in the world. The splendid 2,000-seat baroque building was opened in 1837. You won't even have to queue for a seat. Respectful of culture-loving tourists, Cubans will push you to the front of the line.

### Sunday: go to church

The Pope arrives next month, and religion is the big thing in town. But you don't need to brave the hustle and crowds of Cathedral Square. Head for the white Iglesia del Santo Angel Custodio, on Monserrate, near the waterfront. It nestles among some of the loveliest streets of the old town - just the place to lift the spirits.

### Bracing brunch

The sun will be hot now, and it's time to cool off by the fountain

in the Moorish courtyard of the newly restored Hotel Sevilla. Take tapas here, with perhaps a *mojito* (ice, lime, mint and rum) to revive the spirits. (Mind the gents, though: it was here that Greene's hero, Wormald, was recruited into MI6).

### The old man and the sea

Get a 1954 Chevy to drive you to Hemingway's old villa at the Finca Vigia, 10 miles south of the city - Marie Celeste-like, the gleaming white house is just as he left it when he departed from

Cuba in 1958, shortly before his suicide. With hunting trophies on the wall, whiskey bottles at the ready and the table set for dinner, you expect the big man to walk in at any minute.

### The icing on the cake

Take the lift to the top of the newly opened (but not newly built) José Martí memorial on Revolution Square. Che Guevara smiles up at you while you survey the whole heroic mess that is the Caribbean's largest and greatest city.



## HIGH ROAD

For the past 32 years, the way to travel from Birmingham New Street to London Euston has been by InterCity train. The journey time has increased considerably in that period, from 83 minutes in the Seventies to 100 or more now that Virgin Trains runs the service, rather than British Rail. The fare for a day return, departing at around 9am, is £59.50 return; this falls to £24 after 9.30am. Details of this, and most other trains - but not the one below - from 0345 484950.

## LOW ROAD

Silverlink County sounds like a brand of tennis racket, but is, in fact, the new name for the privatised North London Railways. It, too, runs trains between Birmingham and Euston, though they travel a slower, longer route via Northampton - taking just over two hours. A day-trip starting any time after 8.30am costs £17.90, and if four people travel together they pay a total of £28 - just £7 each. Before 8.30am, though, the fare is a whopping £59.50. Find out more on 01925 207258.

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# 6/SKIING

## Higher than the snow

It sounds scary but simple: you just float off a mountain with a canopy billowing over your head. Anna Rockall goes parapenting at Courchevel.

Skiing off a mountain seemed an unwise idea. Not, you understand, skiing down it, though that can be scary enough: skiing off it into space, hovering over the valley below. You're attached to some kind of flotation aid, obviously, but none the less suspended almost a kilometre above the valley floor.

I had watched in envy from the slopes as multi-coloured canopies had swooped gently in the blue heavens above the snowy peaks, twirling and rising on the thermals and putting us meagre skiers to earth-bound shame. Such a calmly terrifying sport had to be tried.

The scene of the action was the Col de la Loze (already 2,300 metres high), above Courchevel in the French Alps, but the sport, known as parapente, is widely available throughout the French ski resorts. Unless you have some experience, you'll want to do this in tandem - once you are up in the air, there isn't a lot anyone can do to help you if you don't know what you are doing. My guide, Serge, was a typical French ski instructor, with skin the colour of a lightly done steak, and a flirtatious streak. He harnessed me to a contraption that seemed to have far too few buckles, and then hooked himself up behind me. With his skis either side of mine, the silk canopy neatly laid out behind us and the safety checks duly done, we were ready to launch into the thin air.

The slope we were on was gently skiable for about 50 yards, and then plummeted away into a death-defying colouro. Despite the fact that I felt comfortably secure strapped up to Serge, I prayed we would take off before we ended up sliding down the extreme corridor of doom. No fear of that - when

Serge gave the word, we let ourselves start moving down the slope for, ooh, about 5ft before we met with resistance from the canopy behind us, that had immediately filled with air and stood puffed up in a billowing wall of silk. Slowly, very slowly, we skied on down until suddenly we seemed to be airborne.

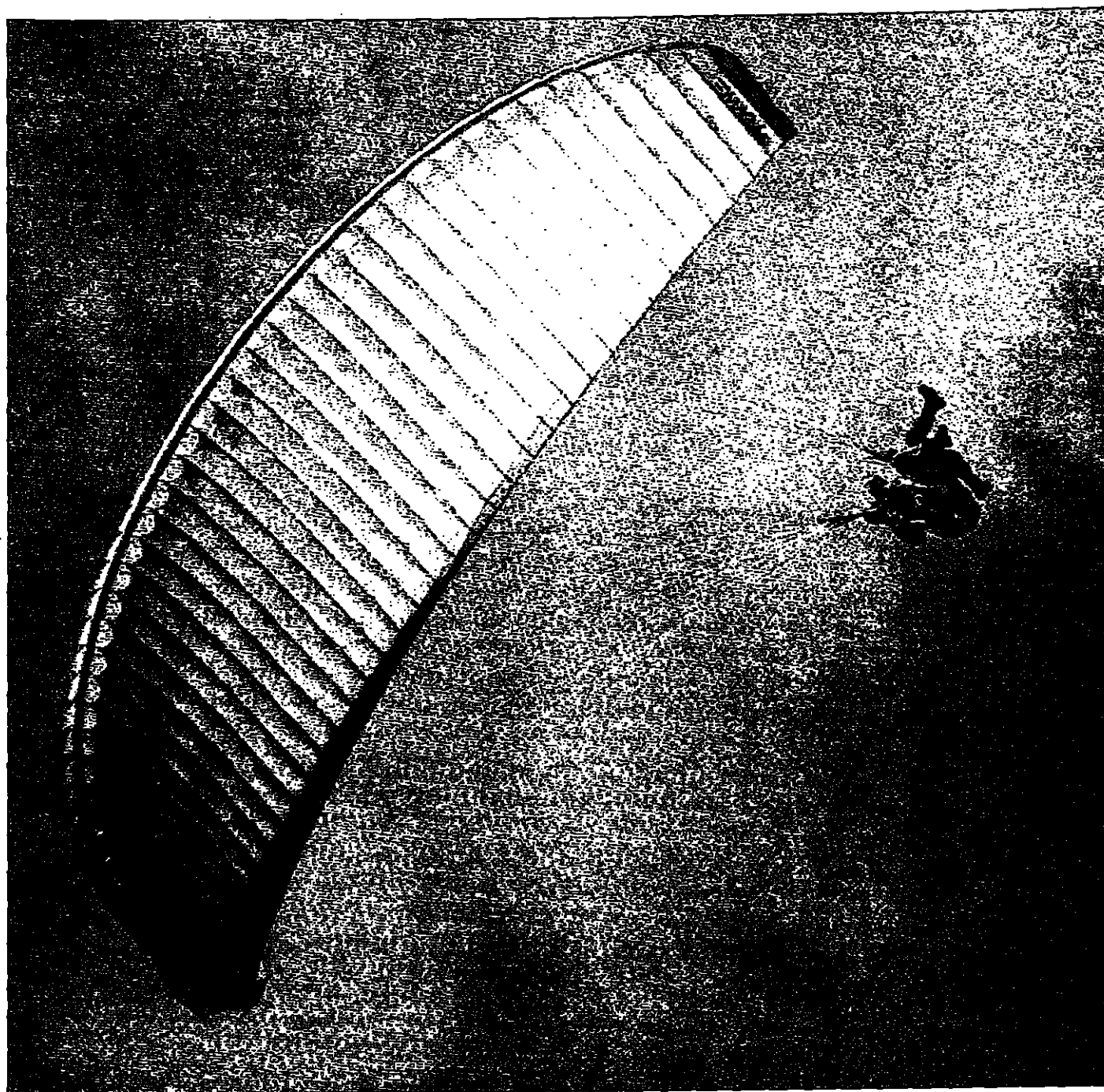
Then suddenly we weren't, and then - burrah - we made it, and were floating gently away from the mountainside.

I was expecting to be terrified, but the fear is all in the anticipation. Although we seemed miles above the valley floor - and rising - peering down

between our skis at inordinate quantities of nothing, I felt safe.

The surprising thing about parapente is your ability to defy gravity. It's not like parachuting, where you simply fall very slowly; you actually ascend and fly unpowered, using the wind and thermals like

Siding upwards: using the wind and thermals, when you parapente you defy gravity and ascend  
Photograph: Steve Godfrey



a bird. The guide used strings to control the angle of the canopy, and before we knew it we were circling higher than all the surrounding mountains. The views, of course, were a bit special, though once I had begun to relax my death grip on Serge's leg I became rather more aware of the cold. It was considerably chillier than the mountainside, so fear of falling was quickly replaced by fear of losing my extremities to frostbite.

The other unexpected (and uncool) problem was airsickness. It hadn't even occurred to me that I could get airsick while risking life and limb, but the gentle, swaying motion, compounded with the odd bumpiness when we hit a thermal, all added up to a worrying bout of nausea. Understandably concerned at the prospect of my throwing up all over his equipment, Serge brought us down after a meagre five minutes (the normal flight time being 10 minutes). As we descended, all worries about high-altitude vomiting faded into insignificance beside the fear of not landing in one piece. The cables of the chairlift looked threateningly in the way, and I had to close my eyes as we swooped just above them, avoiding an undignified death by millimetres (honest).

The ground started coming up rather more quickly than I expected, and before there was time to get concerned about broken ankles or whatever else might happen, we landed with an ungainly thump. I promptly fell over backwards, and struggled to my feet with the grace of a pregnant duck. But despite the fear, the airsickness and the cold, once safely down I longed to be floating dreamily above the peaks again. Skiing away down the mountain I felt dreadfully earthbound, once more a slave to the laws of gravity.

Anna Rockall paid FF450 (about £45) for a parapenting session at Col de la Loze, Courchevel 1850, France. For more details call Chardon Loisirs 00 33 4 79 08 39 60.

## Skis as baggage: what a carry-on

All the big six ski operators now make a charge of £12 or £13 for checking skis and snowboards on to their charter flights. Why? asks Stephen Wood.

Skiers, says Paul Carter, are not the sort of people "who judge a holiday just by its £299 brochure price". Mr Carter is head of marketing at Crystal Holidays, Britain's biggest ski operator, so he is familiar with customers who consider the cost of all the extras. And when he's asked why skiers must pay extra to have their skis carried on a charter flight, he's ready with his defence.

If you've been skiing for a few years, you will remember the time when skis were re-

garded as luggage, and travelled as part of an allowance of 20-odd kilos. And you will have noticed, creeping into the small print of the brochures, a paragraph that normally starts "with a growing number of skiers and snowboarders taking their own equipment on holiday..." and ends with your having to reach into your pocket.

Paul Carter's argument goes like this: "Scheduled airlines will tell you that in-flight meals are free," he says. "But of course that isn't true: the cost of the meals is simply included in the cost of the ticket. There is a cost to us in carrying skis and snowboards, because they involve extra handling costs and add weight to the plane - which increases fuel consumption. And our view is this: that those who benefit from a service should pay for it, and those who don't should not."

On scheduled flights, Crystal buys tickets for its clients, who can (like the other passengers) take their skis and snowboards without charge. But when it runs a charter flight, it hires a plane (with a full tank of fuel) and a crew for a specific flight, and pays a fee to cover all the costs of the charter airline. Crystal doesn't pay separately for fuel or baggage handling; they are, like airline meals, included in the price of the plane. But since the hire price will reflect those increasing costs, says Paul Carter, it's reasonable that those who push them up should pay up. "So rather than spread the extra cost of carriage among all the passengers, we just charge those who have taken their skis and snowboards with them."

Fair enough? Not quite. The operators claim that the bulk of boards and skis which passen-

gers are attempting to get into the aircraft hold has increased the chances of this luggage having to be off-loaded from charter flights; hence the £12-£13 charge which does, in Crystal's words, "improve the reliability of carriage". But when I asked whether ski equipment often has to be off-loaded, Gary Greenwood, operations manager of Gatwick Handling, said that "it's a rare occurrence, although it does happen, particularly with smaller planes". Such as the Boeing 737? No, Mr Greenwood's examples were the BAC 1-11 and the BAe 146, planes that are too small to be used on any normal skiing charter.

And did Gatwick Handling charge a charter airline more for lugging a lot of boards and skis on to a plane? No, said Mr Greenwood: they charged a flat fee for the plane, no mat-

ter how much luggage there was to be loaded.

When I enquired about charter-flight fuel charges, Britannia Airlines was unhelpful. Monarch, however, was quite straightforward: a spokesperson said that airline charter costs were "something that the charter companies and the tour operators don't usually like to discuss with other people". But her exposition of fuel charges was simple: every aeroplane has a maximum payload, and a charter airline would have to be very stupid, when working out the fuel costs for a trip, not to assume that the plane would be fully loaded. So there was no likelihood that the hire charge would be increased for extra boards and skis. Could I quote the spokesperson on that? "I'd rather you didn't," she said.

But if Paul Carter's justification of the carriage charge

may not carry much face value, it is sound: those passengers taking skis or a board are responsible for a higher proportion of the fuel consumption and airport hassle than those who do not, so charging them a higher ticket price is justifiable. And anyway, Crystal isn't doing anything that the other big operators don't (except charging £1 more for carriage, something that Paul Carter says "will have to be looked at next year").

The deal offered is this: you pay the carriage fee, and your board or skis will arrive at your destination at the same time as you do. Or not. If they don't turn up, your fee will be refunded. This isn't a great offer - if you pay for a service and it is not delivered, the least you expect is to get your money back; but Neilson and First Choice sweeten the expensive pill by promising that, if neces-

sary, skis will be provided for you free of charge at the resort until your own arrive (and Neilson even guarantees that the replacements will be "quality skis").

But one operator's offer is unique. The small print in the Airtours brochure looks familiar, promising as it does that boards or skis for which the carriage fee of £12 per person has been paid will, if they cannot be checked on to their owner's flight, be "immediately placed on the next aircraft and transferred to your resort".

So why isn't a refund mentioned? Because it isn't paid: amazingly, Airtours keeps the carriage fee even when your equipment fails to turn up. If you are not the kind of person who judges a holiday just by its £299 brochure price, you may wonder whether that £12 fee is worth paying.

### SKI TIPS

To increase the tempo of your short turns imagine that you are bouncing on a trampoline. Feel the pressure build up under your feet and then release. Make this the tempo of your turning as you start skiing.

Chris Exall

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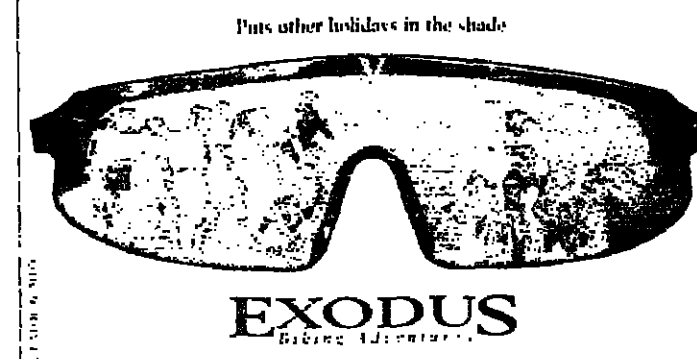
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18 Jan - INDIA - Mumbai

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22 Jan - THAILAND - Phuket

24 Jan - SINGAPORE

26 Jan - JAWA - Jakarta

28 Jan - BALI - Denpasar

30 Jan - SULOESI - Makassar

1 Feb - PHILIPPINES - Cebu

3 Feb - HONG KONG

5 Feb - CHINA - Haikou

7 Feb - VIETNAM - Da Nang

9 Feb - VIETNAM - Ho Chi Minh City

11 Feb - BANGKOK

13 Feb - THAILAND - Koh Samui

15 Feb - SINGAPORE

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## A shot in the dark for the woodcock



Woodcock of the north: they are driven south by the winter, but no one knows why the birds end up in Britain

Photograph: Ardea

The numbers of one of our more flamboyant yet mysterious birds are swelled by migrants this season. Duff Hart-Davis writes in praise of the woodcock.

This is the time of year when shooting men hope to come across that elusive and unpredictable rarity – the woodcock. You can go out and find a pheasant or a pigeon any day, but a woodcock is something else – a bird whose magic derives from its very evanescence.

The most fascinating thing about woodcocks is the way they silently come and go: one day there are none in a wood, and the next you may find several. Most country people reckon they are migrants, and associate their arrival in England with the onset of harsh weather in the far north of Europe; it is well established that ice and snow drive the birds southwards in search of warmer climes, and that during their nocturnal journeys some are forced down by exhaustion, short of their ideal destination. This explains why they are sometimes found in apparently unconsented surroundings, such as the middle of a field of kale. A few old boys still speak of a "fall" of woodcocks, meaning that some have dropped in out of the sky during the night. I treasure the story of the Norfolk squire who, early this century, departed for a winter season at his club in London, leaving his gamekeeper George with instructions to inform him when the wood-

cocks arrived. In due course he received a letter which read, in its entirety: *Horned Sir The kaks becum large*.

No doubt the squire hastened home – for when the woodcocks are in, they add enormously to the excitement of the day. From boyhood in the Chilterns I remember old Harry Brown, the keeper, letting out a tremendous roar of "WOODCOCK!" every time one was sighted.

They jump up with a clap of wings from under a bush, and, considering their rather heavy build, like a jumbo snipe, sink their way through the trees with astonishingly swift and frequent changes of direction.

They are hard to find and difficult to shoot, but they are delicious to eat, tasting like a pheasant that might have been lurking in a marsh: the slight fishy tang doubtless derives from their habit of feeding on earthworms.

Even if winter does swell the population with migrants, some woodcocks remain in Britain all year round, and their breeding habits are unique in several ways. On late spring evenings a male will launch into the form of display known as rudding, during which he patrols his territory with long, circular flights just over the trees.

Back and forth through the dusk he goes, not dodging about as he would in the wood, but flying straight and fast, with heavy, owl-like wing-beats, sometimes in an oblong loop which may be half a mile from end to end, sometimes

in a huge figure of eight. All the time he is turning his head from side to side and uttering two quite different calls: one a single, high-pitched squeak, the other a guttural *urk, urk*.

His mate, meanwhile, is nesting on the ground, often at the foot of a tree. If she has chosen a bed of beech leaves as a site, her wonderful camouflage – marbling of dark brown, light brown and black – makes her almost impossible to pick out. It is said that during daylight she slowly rotates on the nest so as to keep her head away from the sun and prevent her eyes giving off any tell-tale glint that might betray her presence. Certainly woodcocks' eyes are enormous, and set very high on the sides of the head – so high, in fact, that biologists believe the birds can see not only all round them, but over the tops of their heads as well, without moving.

Rotation on a nest is something I have never witnessed. What I have seen is another peculiar habit often dismissed as a fairy tale: a mother carrying a chick between her thighs. One summer afternoon, as I walked quietly along a woodland ride, a woodcock burst out of the undergrowth a few feet away, and I saw at once that there was something odd about her. In flight she looked abnormally upright and elongated, so heavy that she could barely clear the brambles. Staring, I realised that she had a fluffy baby clamped between her knees. Having plopped it down on a new site some 20 yards off, she made two return trips to collect the second and third of her brood.

Migration to Britain, however, remains the most curious facet of woodcock behaviour. It makes perfect sense that the birds should head south for Portugal, Spain, northern Greece and Turkey, to escape the northern winter; but why should they risk a transit of the North Sea when they could travel more safely, and in easy stages, overland? (Experts assume that if strong south-westerly winds blow up, thousands must drown.)

A recent, fascinating suggestion is that the birds are still following the migratory routes pioneered by their ancestors millennia ago, before the North Sea existed, from the time when Britain was still part of mainland Europe. Ringing has shown that latter-day woodcocks return to their wintering and breeding grounds with astonishing fidelity – so perhaps our latter-day visitors steer by age-old instincts, without realising that a potentially lethal expanse of sea lies ahead of them.

A story is told of the late Sir Charles Clore – less knowledgeable about country matters than the Norfolk squire – who used to hold grand pheasant shoots at Stype, his estate in Gloucestershire. One day, when he saw that the bag included a woodcock, he boomed at his gamekeeper, "I like them! We'll rear a thousand of them next year."

His enthusiasm was entirely misplaced. The whole point about woodcocks is that they cannot be reared artificially, like pheasants or partridges. They cannot be corralled or decoyed. On the contrary, they go their own mysterious way, and so retain their magic.

### NATURE NOTE

Oblivious of Mike Foster and his bill to ban hunting with hounds, foxes have started their annual round of procreation – and a rackety business it is. Every night from now until after Christmas, dog foxes will patrol the woods and fields, announcing their presence with volleys of dry, staccato barks. Some males seem to be two-bark specialists, some three: "roff, roff, roff," they go, repeating the call every few minutes as they trawl through the landscape, often following the scent trail of a female that has come into season. The vixen does not answer from a distance; only when brought to close quarters does she give tongue with a blast of hideous, unearthly screams. The noise may be only that of copulation,

threatened or actual, but it sounds like a knock-down, drag-out battle between very large ghosts; especially on nights when the moon shines bright, it is unearthly enough to put the wind up nervous humans, even if they are safe indoors.

Duff Hart-Davis

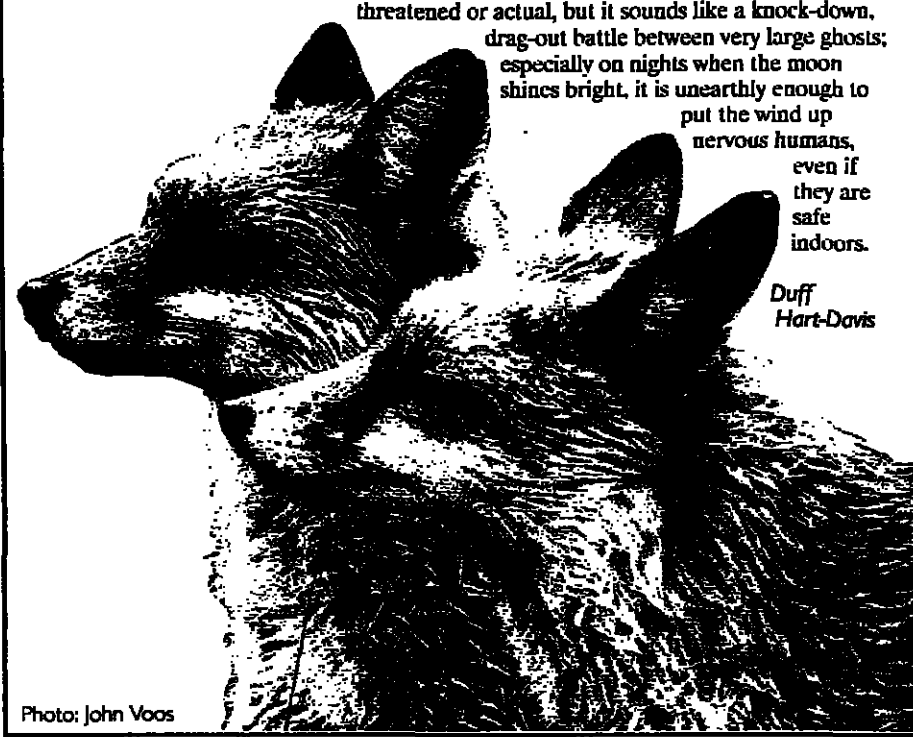


Photo: John Voas

## Christmas gifts for the green at heart

What do you give a nature lover for Christmas? Daniel Butler has a host of helpful suggestions.

The chances are that your family or friends already possess the best field guide or thermal gloves, while binoculars and walking boots are beyond many budgets. *Nid desperandum*; there is a host of relatively inexpensive possibilities that enable you to make a gift to benefit more than the receiver.

Take adoption schemes, for example. London Zoo runs such schemes for endangered animals. Prices generally start at £20 for a gerbil, kookaburra or black widow spider, running up to £6,000 for an elephant. Contact Animal Adoptions, London Zoo, Regent's Park, London NW1 4RY (0171-494 6262).

The Penzance Bat Hospital runs an adoption service for which you (or the recipient of your gift) can sponsor named,

long-term residents. A sum of £15 will feed Eanwig, a brown long-eared bat, for a year, while the donor's nominee gets an adoption certificate, a welcome pack and two "progress reports". Sponsors are also welcome to visit their charges and – in some cases – to handle them. Write to Cornwall WT, Freepost PY1774, Five Acres, Allet, Truro, Cornwall TR4 9DJ (01736 365687).

For those with an aversion to bats, the trust runs seal sponsorship schemes. For £15 you can adopt a specific pup (£10 for juniors) which gives you a certificate, seal pack and six-monthly updates. £30 provides a colour print and an invitation to join a seal watch.

Normally environmentalists blanch at the idea of sheep subsidies, but Suffolk Wildlife Trust has an entirely laudable scheme to help maintain its rare Speckle-faced Beulah flock. These are vital for the health of Sandlings Heath, where they control coarse grasses and scrub. Unfortunately they can never be eco-

nomic because they are allowed to graze only sparsely and must over-winter indoors, so the trust offers packages to cover the feed, shearing and veterinary bills. These range from £15 for a lamb to £50 for a ram. For more information contact Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Brooke House, The Green, Ashbocking, Suffolk IP6 9JY (01473 890089).

You can also provide help out in the wild. Dormice, for example, are threatened almost everywhere, and specially constructed nest boxes can help halt the decline. For £7.50 Cheshire Wildlife Trust (Grebe House, Reaseheath, Nantwich CW5 6DG) will send you a certificate for your own numbered dormouse box, an information pack and updates on occupancy. The Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (18 High St, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1AT – 01380 725670) does the same for £10.

Alternatively, if birds are your passion, the trust runs a scheme to help Braydon Forest's barn owls. These have

been particularly hard hit by the loss of traditional farm outbuildings to residential conversions, and the scheme provides artificial nests on suitable farms. Unfortunately each box costs £30 to build and erect, and the project officer, David Pickett, says the scheme has run out of money and would welcome donations to build further sites.

There are more organic ways of providing food and shelter, however. The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers runs a tree-planting scheme. For a donation of £17, volunteers will plant the donor's choice of native tree, tagged with their name, and from then on each year they will receive a commemorative card and be invited to a tree-planting event.

But this may be too passive for some. Those wanting to get their hands dirty may benefit from a BTCV break. These offer the chance to learn traditional skills while improving the environment.

There are more than 300

working holidays on offer throughout the year, spread across the whole of mainland Britain, ranging from hedge-laying to otter-bolt construction. The cost of such breaks is minimal – volunteers are charged only for food and accommodation, which is often very basic – and prices start at £22 for a weekend and £40 for a week. Information on both tree-planting and breaks is available from the BTCV at 36 St Mary's Street, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 0EU (01491 839766).

Finally, don't forget that gardens and windowsills are miniature environments in their own right. Supplying food and shelter can provide help to dozens of creatures, not to mention increasing human pleasure. The RSPB, for example, has an extensive mail-order range that includes bird tables (starting at £20), nest boxes (£10.50) and feeders (£8). Contact the RSPB shop at The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL (01767 680551).

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Don't look  
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How to lose your

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## Don't look down, don't look up, just bungee

It's the ultimate virtual reality: falling without the bump. And it's terrifying. But bungee-jumping is not as challenging as it appears, writes Eric Kendall.

"They'd have to pay me more than £50 to jump off there." The old boy from Yorkshire had a point. By normal standards, hurling yourself from the top of a crane to bounce around on an elastic band wouldn't be an obvious thing to choose to do, regardless of any inducements offered.

As I explained that you have to pay them the £50, another body came winging down, exclaiming: "Better than sex!" before ping-ponging skywards on the rebound. The old cynic still wasn't convinced: "He can't be doing it right."

It may be fun, as thousands of jumpers have been proving for years, but it doesn't take a Casanova to know that the sex analogy simply can't be correct. OK, bungee-jumping is a brief thrill, involving a mighty surge of adrenaline and ecstatic shouting, but you do it upside down, at speeds of up to 100mph. Call me old-fashioned, but it's not my idea of a roll in the hay.

From the moment you think about jumping, the idea haunts you. If you dither, it could be weeks of torture, the thought forcing its way in whenever there's a gap in the day, and time to frighten yourself. The longer you leave it, the worse it gets.

Dwelling on the origins of bungee doesn't help: a woman on the Vanuatu Islands in the Pacific fled from her marauding husband by climbing a tree. Realising she was trapped, she tied a vine to her ankle and jumped. Meanwhile her husband didn't tie a vine to his ankle, and jumped too, only to overtake her just before hitting the ground in a terminal way. For the woman, proto-bungee was also better than sex, but not the way they mean these days. Since then, islanders have jumped from towers every year with vines tied to their ankles, as a rite of passage.

It's a fantastic sensation. Many people immediately want to jump again, and some come back to become serial jumpers, trying every trick imaginable, from acrobatic stunts to blindfold, fear-enhancing techniques. But for the majority, that's it: they did it because it was there. Without any skills to learn or progress to make, why do it again? It's the ultimate fair-ground ride, though maybe safer, but wouldn't driving the roller-coaster be even better than taking a scary ride?

The minimal danger (when jumping with a reputable operator) and zero qualifications required are both the best and the worst of bungee. You don't have to pull the parachute rip cord, fly the hang-glider, dive deeper or in any way influence the outcome: a sack of potatoes can bungee-jump. If one thing is certain about bungee, whatever anyone tries to tell you, coming to a sticky end is not on the agenda.

sage to manhood and to ensure a good yam harvest.

In the yam-free world of commercial bungee-jumping, the vines are replaced with latex ropes on to which the jumper is tied, usually by the ankles. Cranes, towers and bridges can be jumped from, generally at heights of between 120ft and 300ft. The vital thing is that the drop is greater than the bungee at full stretch, plus a bit for luck, but that's all taken care of by the operator. You've got more important things to worry about, such as sheer terror.

Though more scientific than vine-jumping, bungee also has ritual elements. Being weighed, going through the "no back problems? no heart complaints?" routine is for real, but in the true spirit of the circus, every last ounce of atmosphere and buzz is wrung from the procedure, just in case you might start to feel, despite your nerves, that your money could have been better spent.

But that's cold feet for you. While waiting for the long crane ride, any number of plausible arguments go from your spinning head to your churning stomach, not least that there's no sane, sensible reason for going ahead. The reality, once you've been weighed, joined the queue, stepped into the cage – is that you've come all this way, paid your money – and lots of people are watching. You've got to jump.

And you do. Don't look down, don't look anywhere; don't think, don't breathe. Just 5-4-3-2-1-bungee. The first, fastest, highest drop is almost instantly over, moments of hollow free fall leaving you a few feet from the ground, pumping with adrenaline and gasping at the recognition that you're still alive. Now the real terror begins, as the elastic pulls you inexorably up, suspended in time and space, to hang once more, high in the sky, before plunging back towards earth. Finally your diminishing bounces subside to leave you helplessly dangling on the end of the rope and you're lowered down to exchange endless grins and even transatlantic whoops with other jumpers – a mixture of relief and something more powerful that could have you feeling good for days.

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**Taking the plunge**  
The British Elastic Rope Sports Association, Bersa (01865 311 179), promotes bungee-jumping in the UK and ensures affiliated clubs operate within their strict code of practice; call for details of your nearest Bersa affiliated jump site.

The UK Bungee Club (0171-720 9496) has mobile rigs that operate all over the country, as well as the permanent site at Chelsea Bridge. Since 1992 more than 100,000 people have jumped with them. The

first jump costs £50, subsequent jumps £35. Approximately one-third of their customers jump for charity, one third as a challenge (in some cases having been given "gift" jumps – it's more exciting than a book token). They categorise the final third as adrenaline junkies. Summer is the main season, though weekend jumps continue throughout the year.

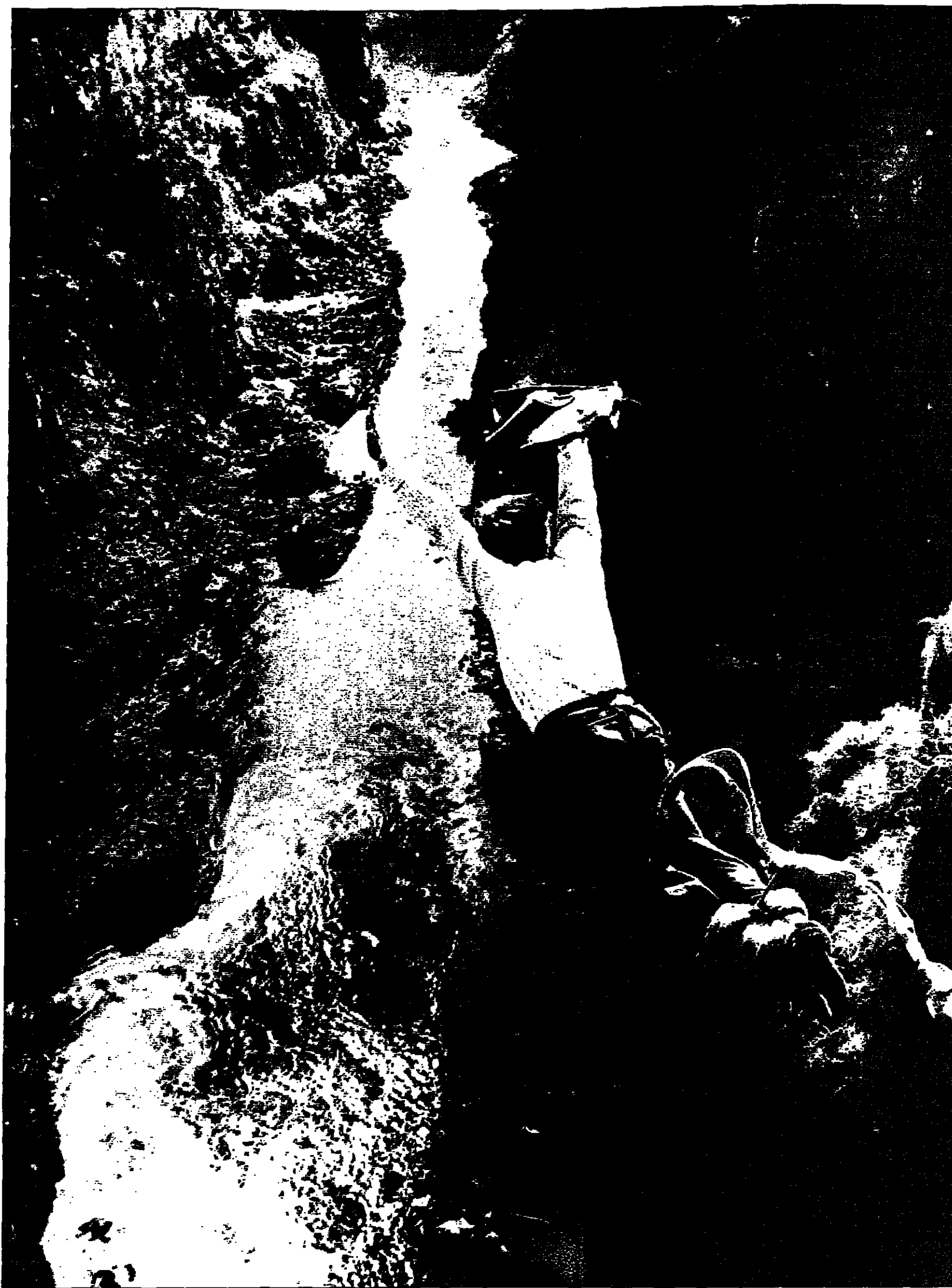
Most UK jumping is from cranes, though the first jump was made from Clifton Suspension Bridge, in 1979. Some

aficionados claim that jumping in impressive gorges such as New Zealand's Skipper's Canyon adds something to the experience, but a crane probably gives the most extreme sensation of exposure and height. Jumps have also been made from balloons, helicopters, cable cars and dams.

Safety records of reputable companies are impressive. The only special requirements for the jumper, beyond basic good health, are to empty pockets of loose change and to wear clothing that's tight

**Better than sex?** After a jump there's a mixture of relief and something more powerful that could have you feeling good for days

Photograph: Peter Andrews/Reuters



## How to lose your inhibitions – dramatically

It was a backwards jump into the unknown, but for Jonathan Stebbings a weekend 'mytho-drama' event was both rewarding and liberating.

Within half an hour of starting the Wild Dance weekend I felt way out of my depth. I found myself shifting from one foot to the other as the rest of the group (an intriguing mix of ages, genders and lifestyles) thrashed, rolled, cried and cursed to a tribal rhythm thumped out on a massive drum. If I shut my eyes the beat did become a hypnotic, but I wasn't going to "express" myself for anybody.

This was a birthday present. I had asked for an experience I would not normally choose, and my wife had presented me with Wild Dance Events' brochure and suggested "Vision & Regeneration in Winter's Tale" at the Globe Theatre. This was described as "a weekend of mytho-drama". What attracted me was the prospect of hatching it up with Mark Rylance and Richard Olivier, two leading lights behind the rebirth of Shakespeare's Globe.

As the course developed it

became clear that mytho-drama is a way of using a dramatic text to explore one's own emotional condition. Each person, obviously, gets something different out of the experience. Our dramatic text, *The Winter's Tale*, is an archetype of emotional stagnation and regeneration for which participants were asked to bring two suitable symbols. So from the depths of Oxfordshire I headed for London with some horse manure (my symbol of stagnation) and an egg from my daughter's chicken (regeneration).

The first day concentrated on the tragic first half of *The Winter's Tale*, and it finished with a requiem chant and the option to present an offering to an altar for something we had lost. I still felt silly swaying and singing in a central African dialect. But after 10 minutes – you need patience before the spirit turns up – I began to feel a strong urge to present my egg to my long-dead father. The more my inhibitions bridled at the prospect, the more I felt compelled to walk alone, in front of all those people, and make a private, personal gesture to someone I had been unable to communicate with in life and barely able to think about after

his death. I found myself addressing an issue I had buried for 10 years, clearly and sincerely. It was like an unblocked sink draining away at last.

The next morning began with Richard Olivier leading us on a journey through the elements and seasons as a mythic assessment of our lives at different stages. Again, I felt that to view my condition as static or dynamic, male or female, was pop psycho-babble.

Apparently I was stuck in the autumn of a static male; in other words, I was a crusty old bugger like King Lear, who needed a good shove towards the next stage – "dynamic female". I had to "become" Perdita, heroine of *The Winter's Tale*. As a classically repressed Englishman I like to camp it up with the best of them; but turning into a 16-year-old shepherdess who is really a lost princess wasn't so compelling. However, soon we were moving to the rhythm of the drum and I found myself drawn to Perdita's wintry domain. Some lilies on the altar caught my attention and as I sniffed them in my abandonment, red pollen stained my nose. Before long I had daubed my face and arms and began behaving in the way one can't re-

member at a good party.

I spent the rest of the day looking like a savage. I braved lunch at a Southwark pub, and then threw myself into the next ritual. This culminated in being led blindfold by Richard Olivier along passages and up stairs. I was taken through a door and felt the wind on my face. I realised we were on the roof, seven floors up. I was led up ladders and round corners – I heard traffic far below and trains on the London Bridge line. Then I was told to fall backwards.

I expected to be caught almost immediately, but I continued falling into space for what seemed a delicious and liberated age. Then hands reached out to stop me. I suppose the essence of it was to be willing to take a risk – literally a leap in the dark.

Wild Dance, a non-profit making organisation, began seven years ago after Richard Olivier organised an event for the American poet Robert Bly, author of *Joni Jahn* and dove of the mythic movement. A veteran of the best and victim of the worst aspects of the men's movement, Olivier developed Wild Dance Events from his work with Bly.

It is now Britain's leading ex-

ponent of workshops for men and women and runs many events – from evenings to week-long retreats, for men, women, mixed groups, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters. The media include poetry, story-telling, music, drumming and dance. Every event is unique, adapting to the needs and personalities of those taking part. Many of the rituals are chosen or even invented as the event happens.

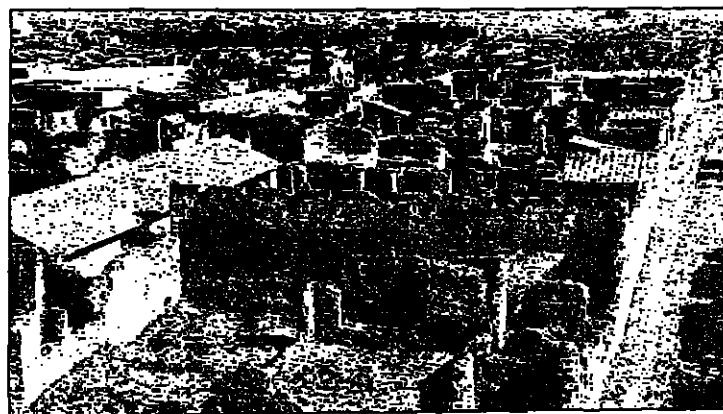
There is no connection with any religion or New Age practice, so it is a comfortable place for rational sceptics and fundamentalists. You don't need experience or talent to take part, and at no point are you expected to reveal anything about yourself. Great emphasis is placed on physical and emotional safety; the leaders remain detached from proceedings to ensure everyone's well-being.

Next year their events will include a weekend for fathers and sons, two rites of passage weeks and mytho-drama weekends with Richard Olivier and Mark Rylance, based on the Globe's productions.

For next year's programme, call Wild Dance Events (0171-813 4260), or write to BCM, Box 8159, London WC1N 3XX.

DON'T MISS TOMORROW'S...

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY  
**TRAVEL**



### THE SHADOW OF VESUVIUS

Geoff Hill visits Naples and Pompeii

**Plus:** all you'll ever need to know about skiing in France

YOUR PRACTICAL GUIDE TO HOLIDAYS

# 14/WALKING

## The Empire hikes back

It was built to keep the Picts at bay, but now it has become a promenade for walkers ...  
*Hamish Scott patrols Hadrian's Wall.*

Old frontiers are thought-provoking. Rivers, hills and hedgerows that once defined a nation's territorial identity revert to being harmless features of a larger landscape once the winds of history have changed. Flint arrowheads and iron swords, bullet-cases and rejected visa applications may lie buried in the soil, but the line defended with such passion has vanished, like some long-dead tom-cat's urine trail, and can scarcely be detected on the ground.

In Northumberland, however, one of the most significant of frontiers in the history of Europe still exists. In AD 122 the Emperor Hadrian ordered the construction of a wall that would define the farthest limit of the Roman empire. Perhaps even at the time there were questions raised about some details of the project, such as the need for gateways every mile, even on the steepest cliff, but orders were obeyed and within eight years the wall had been completed. Some 20ft in height, 10ft wide and 76 miles long, with garrisons sufficient for 10,000 men, it stretched in an unbroken line from the North Sea to the Solway Firth and was so superbly built that long stretches still remain virtually intact, a promenade for hikers following the footsteps of legionary patrols.

We began our own patrol at Steel Rig, from a tree-lined car park in a bleak expanse of Border moorland. Taking a footpath to the south, we immediately reached the wall, reduced by plunder to chest-height but still a massive barrier of well-cut stone aligned with military precision along the jagged edge of an escarpment. Our route lay to the left, eastwards through the grazing lands of the Votadini,

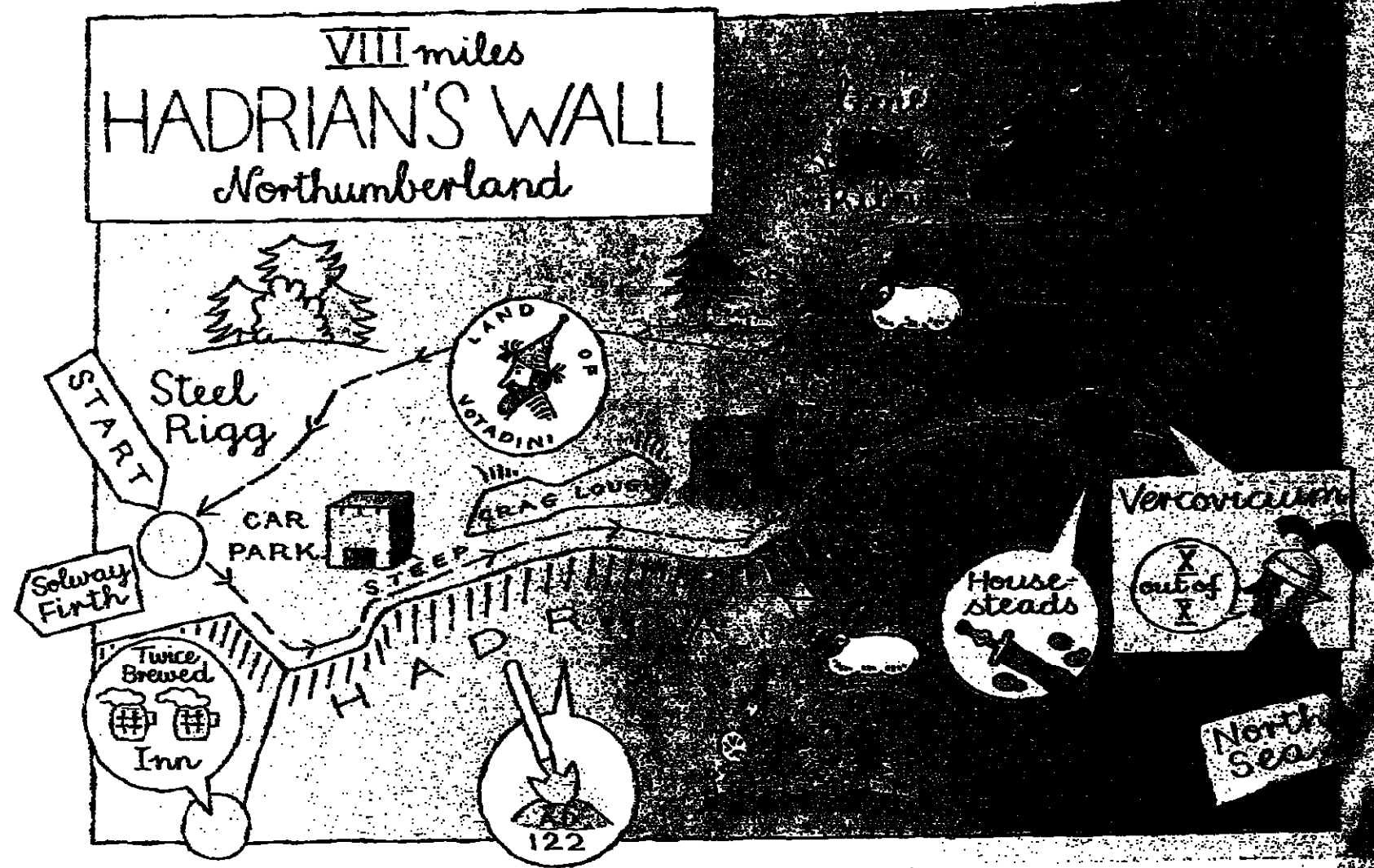
a Celtic tribe whose views, presumably, were not consulted in the planning stages of the project.

Roman civil engineers took a virile attitude to contours. Following the whinstone ridge, the path beside the wall dips and climbs along the basalt crags with no concessions to civilian knees. Legionaries could march for 20 miles loaded down like mules, and then, before they had their dinner, build themselves a camp that would last 2,000 years. Few modern visitors would care to haul a single block of stone up any of the steeper slopes.

Coming to our first milecastle, we rested to admire the view. To the north the ground dropped steeply from below the gateway, with rough, uncultivated pasture stretching to the conifer-clad hills of Kielder Forest.

The southern view, towards the Pennine moors, was equally as desolate, and imagination was required to visualise the roads and farmsteads, garrisons and settlements that formed the Roman landscape. Two tattooed walkers nodded to us in a friendly manner, but there was no sign of hostile Picts, so we continued our patrol above a reed-fringed loch, through a pretty cliff-side wood of rowan, hazel and Scots pine and on past a lonely farmhouse in the lee of Hotbanks Crag. Despite the setting there were no signs advertising Teas or Bed & Breakfast. Northumbrian hill-farmers, even on well-trodden routes, seldom fraternise with hikers.

The route grew busier approaching Housesteads, the wall's most popular attraction. The excavated fort is a ghost town of low, ruined walls that housed a garrison from far-flung corners of the empire. There's an impressive villa that was home to the commanding officer, barracks, stores and even a small hospital, but the most poignant symbol of the Pax Romana is a corridor that once contained a row of cosy seats built over a drain. If any soldier



ever questioned the benefits of Roman life, his doubts were soon settled in the known world's last latrine.

Having dutifully paid our entrance fee at the museum, we carried on for half a mile to a stile across the wall at King's Wicket. The linear nature of the frontier does not provide many opportunities for decent circuits, but from here a pleasant footpath loops back to Steel Rig.

It's a lonely route across rough grassland grazed by sheep and shaggy Galloway beef cattle, leading through a small plantation and on past an old lime kiln. Agricultural improvers in the 18th cent-

ury converted upland farmers to the benefits of quicklime with a zeal not seen since the Romans introduced the Votadini to hot baths. High above us to the left, the wall appeared as a spine of stone surmounting the cliff edge. Distant voices could be heard, faint enough to sound like Latin.

Warily returning to the car park, having travelled for eight miles and 18 centuries, we headed off for lunch. The Twice Brewed Inn was built for soldiers working on the military road that General Wade constructed to protect the British empire from Jacobite barbarians. Apparently the

beer was too weak for the redcoats, and required a second brew. Our Marston was, however, strong enough and very welcome, while Sunday lunch, though scarcely rivaling the roast swan stuffed with peacocks of Lucullus, was substantial, and cost just £3.95.

**Directions**  
Steel Rig is signposted off B6318 Chollerford-Greenhead road, opposite the information centre near the Twice Brewed Inn. From the National Trust car park at Steel Rig, follow the footpath sign to wall. Turn left along line of wall and follow

way-marked right-of-way to Housesteads.

● From Housesteads, continue along the southern (right-hand) side of the wall for half a mile, to King's Wicket.

● Cross the stile and bear left along the footpath over grassland to a small plantation. Follow the path through it and across Pentine Way to a lime kiln.

● From the kiln, continue straight ahead along a faint path for half a mile, then bear left along a track towards Hotbanks Farm.

● Turn right over a stile before a farm gate and follow a way-marked path across fields to return to the car park.

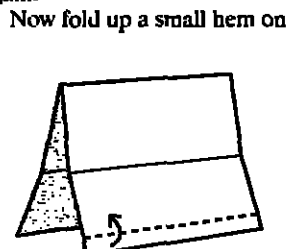
Map: Ordnance Survey Landranger 86

## GAMES

### BAWN O'BEIRNE RANELAGH DON'T JUNK IT - USE IT

More origami this week - a credit-card case designed by Humata Huzita, who is a physics professor in Padua.

Start with a piece of A4 paper. Fold it in half, bringing the two shorter edges together. Then fold both free edges to the crease in the middle and unfold again.

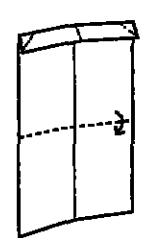


each side as shown below. Fold the corners in to the crease in the middle. Do this on both sides.

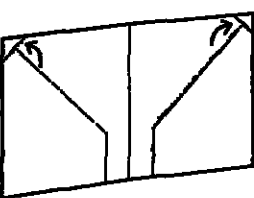
Next, fold up again along the crease. Leaving these folds in place, unfold the top fold (the first one you made) and turn the paper over, then rotate to leave a short edge at the top.

Fold the top down to make a hem. You will notice two

triangular pockets appear. Fold in half, tucking the bottom corners into the top pockets.



into the four pockets.



## BOOK OF THE WEEK WILLIAM HARTSTON

Did you know that if you measure the circumference of your head in inches and divide by  $\pi$ , then round to the nearest eighth, you get your hat size? Did you know that the millionth digit of  $\pi$  is 1, or that the 360th digit and the two on each side of it read "360"?

I learned these marvellous pieces of information from a new book, *The Joy of  $\pi$*  (Allen Lane, £12.99), by David Blatner. The major part of this book is a history of man's quest to achieve ever more accurate approximations to the ratio between the circumference and diameter of a circle. It is the story of geniuses and obsessives, from such great mathematicians as Newton and Euler, both of whom made significant contributions to the theory of  $\pi$  (indeed it was Euler who was the first to call it by the name of the Greek letter for  $\pi$ ), to modern-day  $\pi$ -hunters such as the Chudnovsky brothers, who calculated 8 billion digits of  $\pi$  in 1996, and Kanada and Takahashi who extended the record to over 51 billion digits this year.

The book is beautifully designed to include the first million digits. The perfect Christmas gift for anyone fascinated by mathematics.

## PANDORA MELLY GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Rowley Leigh, 47, chef at Kensington Place restaurant, London W8

Nine years ago, before I started playing, I thought golf was desperately suburban - a game for boring people in car-coats - but now I absolutely enjoy it. I know the people who play are awful, but it doesn't demerit what used to be quite a civilized game.

It's a nice walk, and you can play entirely against yourself. The whole point is to have an inner calm - very Zen, because you can't really control how you feel or how you're going to play. Anyone who plays competitively against other people is completely mad.

Proper golf is a good country game, and it doesn't matter how bad you are - at least once in a while you're going to hit a shot as good as Nick Faldo or Seve Ballesteros. And when you do it's sheer exhilaration.

My partners have a sort of team called Hack in the Bush Club, and we all cheat like hell by giving each other free shots. If you miff your drive you get another go. We do

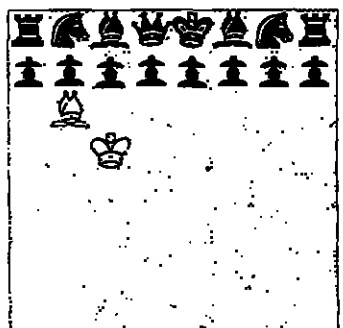
stretch the rules a little bit, as I quite often miss the ball completely.

I like to play on Sunday afternoons in Deauville, where it is incredibly difficult to get on the course. There's always a huge crowd milling round, waiting for their tee-time, which is the allotted six-minute span to start off. When I eventually got on last time, my first ball hit a barn door. There was a huge clattering bang, and anybody who hadn't actually been watching knew what had happened. But I'm so bad that I'm impervious to humiliation.

I play on Wimbledon Common, and whenever I'm about to make a shot, I'll always hear someone in the background screaming "Come here, Rowley!" which is incredibly off-putting. Ever since Eastenders, everybody's called their dog Rowley.

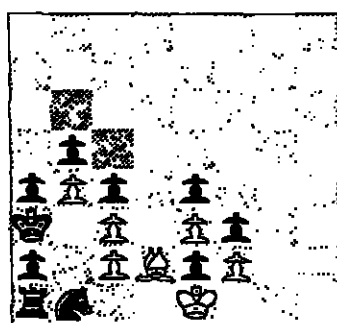
From Wimbledon Common, take the district line to High Street Kensington, and then it's a pleasant walk up Kensington Church Street to the delights of the Kensington Place Restaurant and bar.

## CHESS: WILLIAM HARTSTON



1.c6 Bxa7 2.Qb6+! Kxb6 3.Kd8 Kc5 4.Kc7 Bb6 mate.

The way White's pieces each dance forward one step on the diagonal, then skip back to occupy their original squares, gives considerable charm to the composition.



We have two problems for you today, with two things in common. The first is that they are both help-mates - which means that both sides co-operate to reach a position in which Black is mated - and the second is something you will not recognise until you have solved them both.

The first position is a helpmate in four: Black moves first and both sides conspire to reach a position in which White's fourth move gives mate. This was first shown to me on a long train journey, and it kept me happily infuriated for about three-quarters of an hour. I spent ages trying to checkmate the black king on e7, but first there's the problem that 1.c6 puts White in check, and then there's the other problem of leaving e8 vacant if the king moves to e7.

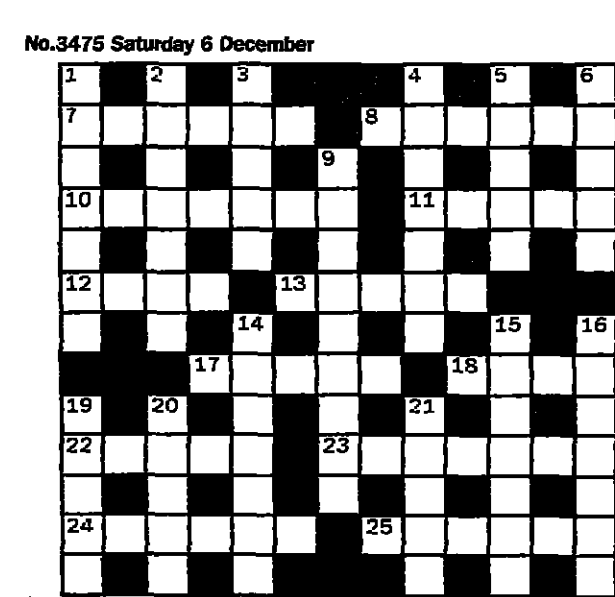
My next idea was to get the king to d8 and queen to e8, while White's moves are Bxa7, Bxb8, Kb6 and Be7. But how do the black king and queen swap places in four moves?

The answer (obvious once you've seen it) is very elegant:

I do not know who composed the first position, but this one is by Leon Loewentow and is a help-mate in five. If it were White's move, he could play Bc1 and it would be over, but Black has no waiting move that lets him do it. What we need to do is somehow spend four moves coming back to much the same position, but with White to move.

Here's how it is done: 1.Kb2 Bc1+ 2.Kc3 Bb2+ 3.Kxb4 Bc3+ 4.Ka3 Bb2 and now 5.b4! Bc1 mate! In the first position it was White's king and bishop that retraced their steps. In this case both the black king and white bishop danced round in complete circles. The backtracking is what makes these things so difficult to solve.

## CONCISE CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- Gatekeeper (6)
  - Roar (6)
  - Bounce back (7)
  - Group of singers (5)
  - Scented powder (4)
  - Yellowish pigment (5)
  - Fictive used by glaziers (5)
  - Linear measure (4)
  - Firework (5)
  - Best (7)
  - Convent superior (6)
  - Makes amends (6)
- DOWN**
- Function (7)
  - Run with ball at one's feet (7)
  - Happen again (5)
  - Planet (7)
  - Deluge (5)
  - Weapon (5)
  - Schooling (9)
  - Nonsense (7)
  - Flower (7)
  - Pharmacist (7)
  - Written composition (5)
  - Guardman's hat (5)
  - Declare (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Hobbler, 2 Legator (Obligator), 3 Emulgent, 4 Help, 5 Gull, 6 Eased, 7 Phoney, 8 Runner, 9 Sordid, 10 Pedlar, 11 Eaves, 12 Trot, 13 Gear, 14 Magic wand, 15 Facing, 16 Tetchy, 17 Downy, 18 Hush up, 19 Bump, 20 Eulogy, 21 Loner, 22 Gung, 23 Oiler, 24 Elbow room, 25 Tunnelled, 26 Exotic, 27 Dupes, 28 Set off, 29 Daring, 30 Peewee, 31 Rancid, 32 Taxi, 33 Gnat.

## BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON

East-West game; dealer South

North		East	
♠	9 8 5 2	♠	7 4
♥	K 9	♥	6 5 3 2
♦	Q 6 4 3	♦	K
♣	A 4	♣	J 8 7 6 5

West		South	
♠	A	♠	K Q 10 6 3
♥	Q 8 7 4	♥	A 10
♦	J 10 9 8	♦	A 7 5 2
♣	Q 10 9 2	♣	K 3

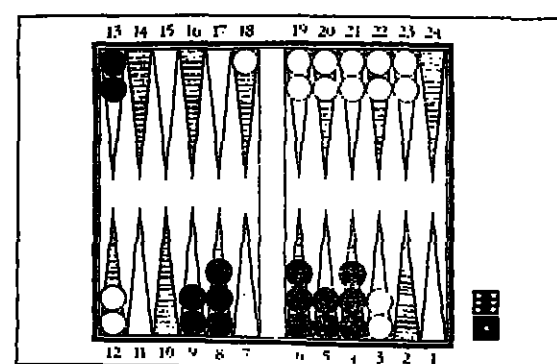
This deal was originally set as a problem, but it is not just a question of spotting an answer - I want you to find the two solutions.

Perhaps the bidding went: one spade - four spades, and west leads the jack of diamonds. Dummy plays low and the king appears. Over to you!

The obvious approach is to win and play trumps, but now west takes his ace and continues with the ten of diamonds. East ruffs the queen if it is played, and there are still two diamond tricks to be lost. The "official" solution was to let the king of diamonds hold. Can you see the difference? When west gets in with the ace of spades, he can give his partner a diamond ruff, but it is only a losing diamond - south still has the ace and queen of diamonds intact to make later.

And the alternative? Well, south can still recover even if he wins the first trick with his ace. He eliminates both hearts and clubs first before leading a trump. West wins, and the queen of diamonds is ruffed away by east. However, this leaves east on lead with no safe exit and either a heart or a club from him gives declarer a ruff and discard and his tenth trick.

## BACKGAMMON: CHRIS BRAY



As I strolled between the boards of the weekly tournament at the Double Fives (DF) Club I spotted this position where The Doyen - George Suliminski - had a 61 to play with the score at double match point.

Trivial, I thought. He must make the full prime by playing 13/7, 8/7. Even if his opponent hits with a 1 he is likely to stay on the bar while his opponent's home board will self-destruct. Even if Black is unfortunate enough to enter immediately after being hit he will still have a full prime versus a 5-prime. If in the original position The Doyen plays something like 8/2, 6/5 then he runs a number of risks: losing the race to a well-timed set of double fours; having a man on his mid-point hit as he brings home his men; and having difficulty clearing his outside points. By making his bar-point now he avoids all these problems.

Meanwhile The Doyen continued to ponder. We don't keep records at the DF, but it is reckoned that he lost a voluntary shot at the time of the Suez crisis. True to form, after another minute's thought he duly played 8/2, 6/5. Nothing exciting happened for the rest of the game and he easily won both game and match.

Intrigued, I analysed the position using Jellyfish. The results surprised me. The two plays lead to an identical winning percentage (75 per cent). The advantages of making the bar-point are offset by the times that White hits the blot and goes on to win. The lesson is that two plans can be equally valid. Don't assume, as I did, that the obvious move is necessarily the best.

Incidentally, if Black had already doubled, making the bar is best as this leads to winning more gammons - But this factor is irrelevant at double match point.





Pride of Cambridge drawings from the Fitzwilliam Museum (now part of a collection published by Cambridge University Press). Far left, French School, 17th century, Bluebell and dragonfly; top row from left, Pieter Withoos' foxglove and ornamental flowers by Thomas Robins the Elder; bottom row from left, *Datura rosea* by Augusta Innes Withers and Michiel van Huysen's flower in a Chinese vase



## The gardener's handsome prints

Rare plant drawings, succulent kitchen vegetables, gorgeous antique plants: Anna Pavord offers a Christmas books selection.

The worst Christmas present I ever had was a pair of insoles for my wellington boots; practical, without a doubt, necessary even, given the fact that blood regularly forgets to visit the distant lands below my knees. But how dreary that present was. And, unfortunately, the person who gave it to me was around when I was unwrapping it. "Gosh," I said, forcing my mouth into a more than usually hideous rictus of a smile. "How very useful." The donor looked pleased.

But what he didn't realise was that usefulness comes very low on my list of priorities. Presents are treats. They don't come round very often and I like them to be deeply useful things that I would never think of buying for myself. That's why books make such good presents. The element of treat is there, but there is the added relish of matching book to person.

Top of my Christmas present list (if I didn't already have it) would be the beautifully printed collection of *Flower Drawings* (Cambridge University Press, £11.95) put together and annotated by David Scrase, keeper of paintings, drawings and prints at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The

Fitzwilliam has an astonishing hoard of flower paintings and drawings. More than 100 oil paintings (including work by Bruegel and Jan van Huysum) and 900-plus drawings were bequeathed to them in 1973 after the death of Major Henry Broughton, of Anglesey Abbey in Cambridgeshire, who had spent a lifetime amassing these treasures.

Many of the drawings are bound in albums and are rarely on view at the museum. So this book gives us a chance to see images that are not only luscious, but also unfamiliar. It's touching, too, in days when the garden presents nothing more riveting to the eye than banks of soggy leaves, to gaze at an image as ravishing as Pieter Withoos' foxglove, painted in the second half of the 17th century.

Although the foxglove must then have been as familiar a wild flower as it is today, you rarely see them in flower studies. Perhaps the reason this was carefully recorded on vellum, the watercolour highlighted with touches of gum arabic, is that it is not an ordinary, purple kind of foxglove, but a soft, enchanting pink. It is exactly the colour of the strain we now know as 'Apricot'. Was this perhaps the first time a foxglove of such a colour had been seen? Was this why Withoos painted it with such care that 300 years on, you can still feel the velvety softness of the spotted gloves climbing up the stem?

Like all the best experts,

David Scrase wears his learning with deceptive lightness. His introduction to the book sets in place the great names of flower painting in Europe, such as Ehret and Redouté, but the treats come from his intimate knowledge of lesser-known painters such as the Dietzsch sisters, who worked in Nuremberg at the end of the 18th century. Nuremberg and London were the two most important centres of botanical art at that time, German artists benefiting particularly from the patronage of the rich physician, Christoph Jakob Trew. Barbara Dietzsch's pale iris, glowing luminously against a dark background, is a triumph.

The book is arranged chronologically, starting with images from medieval manuscripts and a Dutch Book of Hours, where pimpernels and heartsease are scattered in the margins of the manuscript. It finishes with the imposing flowers of *Magnolia campbellii*, grown at Kew and painted by the Australian artist Margaret Stones in 1989. I was glad to see that Nicolas Robert (1614-1681), whose fabulous watercolours on vellum I first saw at the Fitzwilliam Museum, is well represented in this collection. Now I can look at his outrageous red-and-white-striped tulips every day.

Feeding the soul is the great luxury of being alive, but you need to look after the stomach, too. For that, I'd choose Christopher Lloyd's *Gardener Cook* (Frances Lincoln, £20). He never writes about any-

thing of which he has not first-hand experience, and is as uncompromising about excellence in the kitchen as he is in his garden at Great Dixter, Sussex. He does his own cooking, in case there's any one out there about to say, "Oh, well it's all very well for him..."

That means the recipes can be borrowed by anyone who has an equal love of good, fresh food, but also has 100 other things to do in a day as well as cook. I like them, too, because Mr Lloyd, having flourished all his life on lashings of cream and butter, sees no reason, in his seventies, to give them up. We all have to die, and, like him, I am happier to die from a surfeit of fresh Jersey cream than (which is more likely) in a car crash on the M3. So plenty of double cream in the leek tart (p130), double helpings of double cream with marinated figs (p47), and liberal quantities of the stuff in duck stewed with green peas (p152).

The text, accompanied by Howard Sooley's succulent photographs, covers the growing of fruit and vegetables as well as their treatment in the kitchen. Again, you know you are in the presence of a man who has done all he is writing about. On parsnips: "Sow in quiet weather (otherwise the winged seeds take off)." On quinces: "Pick the mature, fresh fruit as late as you dare, but watch out for the depredations of brown rot fungal patches." On fennel: "Late-maturing crops have been among my most successful, as there is less

urge for the plants to run up to flower." My copy is already spattered with mud and melted butter. That is a potent sign of its worth.

I first came across *The Essential Earthman* through an American friend, who sent me a copy from the States. It's a collection of pieces by the late Henry Mitchell, who for more than 30 years was gardening correspondent of the *Washington Post*. Now the book has been reprinted by Bloomsbury (£12.99) as one of the latest in their admirable series of gardening classics.

Like Mr Lloyd, Mr Mitchell has decided views and a trenchant way of putting them over. "Marigolds gain enormously in impact when used as sparingly as ultimatums," he writes. And "compared to gardeners, I think it is generally agreed that others understand very little about anything of consequence." The "generally agreed" is typical. It's a phrase he often uses to preface some outrageous piece of special pleading.

Collections such as this, which you can drop in and out of, make ideal bedtime books. Mr Mitchell restores sense where there has been much gardening silliness. A huge fuss, for instance, has been made over the last couple of years about plants that are potentially harmful. The outcome will be that soon we shall be banned from growing them. Here is Mitchell on colchicums: "Some people get upset by poisonous plants, yet those of us who are not forever gnawing on flowers need not be

deterred. It is startling that people accept that war, automobiles and power mowers are ordinary hazards, but begin to fidget if there is a colchicum somewhere, as if it might attack or poison one when dozing." Hurray!

David Stuart's interest is in the background and history of the plants we use in our gardens and his most recent book, *Gardening with Antique Plants*, has been gorgeously produced by Conran Octopus, £25. Pinks, poppies, peonies, marigolds,

musky roses - all the must-have plants are here. Having previously run his own nursery, Dr Stuart is as good on the practical aspects of growing these plants as he is on their history. The history of gardens and plants is still the most undervalued aspect of our past. Catch up with Mavis Batey's *Regency Gardens* (Shire Publications, £5.99), which is at the same time scholarly and concise. Then drool over Vivien Russell's pictures, in Edith Wharton's

*Italian Gardens* (Frances Lincoln, £25).

Finally, persuade someone to give you a copy of *The Good Gardens Guide 1998*, edited by Peter King (Ebury Press, £14.99). It's an invaluable reference to a thousand gardens, most of them in Britain, with a scatter for Channel-hoppers in France, Belgium and The Netherlands. With this in hand, in the dog days after Christmas, you can plan the gallivanting to come.

### THE INDEPENDENT

## Photograph Offer

As a special offer, you can order any of these best-selling colour photographs by Independent and Independent on Sunday photographers at the special rate of £15 each, or 2 for £25, or 3 for £35 12" x 9" prints



Pheasant by Brian Harris



Jantar Mantar Observatory (India) by Kalpesh Lathigra



Frosted Rose by Brian Harris

### CUTTINGS

Gillian Simmill, of Dorington, near Shrewsbury in Shropshire, wrote asking for advice about using polythene under gravel areas, to suppress weed growth: "I intend to have gravel walks beside flower borders, across the front of my cottage, and also a gravelled area under a winter cherry, through which I hope to grow small spring bulbs. Obviously, I won't lay polythene where the bulbs are to grow. The paths will not be heavily used, as there will be paving on the other sides of the borders. I want to use gravel, partly to keep costs down and also to vary the textures of the hard surfaces."

By the time the hiatus caused by my recent three-week holiday was over, Mrs Simmill had answered her own question, laying plastic sheeting called Nortene under the gravel of her paths. It's best laid on top of sand, to give a smooth bed for it to sit on. Mrs Simmill used 20/10mm gravel, heavier than the pea gravel that we used recently on our sitting-out area. This is a sensible grade for paths, where gravel may kick up, Nortene, says

Mrs Simmill, is not easy to find, but Agralan sell a black material called Permalay, which can be used in a similar way. A pack of Permalay 1.6m wide and 6m long costs £9.95. An economy roll, the same width but 50m long, costs £62.95. For details call 01285 860015.

Whichford Pottery is offering a minimum discount of 10 per cent off all its traditional hand-thrown clay garden pots at a series of pre-Christmas sales. Some pots are half price. Bargains (as well as tea, coffee, home-made soup and cake) are on offer today and tomorrow (9am-5pm) at Whichford Pottery, Whichford, near Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire (01608 684416) and at The Hop Shop, Castle Farm, Shoreham, Kent, which is open from 10am-5pm.

The River Parrett Trail Project in Somerset arose from an unusual partnership between farmers, environmentalists, river agencies and

local craftsmen, with the aim of interpreting and exploiting (in the best sense of the word) the strange and particular landscape of the Somerset Levels. Over the winter and spring, a series of 10 workshops has been set up in this heart of Somerset's willow-growing area. This weekend, Clare Wilks demonstrates how to make live willow seats for the garden. The workshop will be repeated over the weekend of 24-25 January (closing date for applications, 19 December). On 21-22 March, the sculptor Serena de la Hey will show how to create willow sculptures (closing date for applications, 20 February). The workshops cost from £125 to 155 per person. The package includes a full day's tuition, all materials, coffee, sandwiches, dinner in a local pub. B&B at a local pub or farm and a day's exploration of the watery Somerset Levels. For more information, send a stamped, addressed envelope to Ros Marchant, Red Cottage, Stowell, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 4PD (01963 374413).

### Independent/Independent on Sunday Photograph Application Form

Title	Name	Please send me:
Address		Jantar Mantar Observatory <input type="checkbox"/>
		Pheasant <input type="checkbox"/> Frosted Rose <input type="checkbox"/>
		I enclose my cheque, made payable to The Independent,
		for £..... (p&p inc.)
Postcode		Signed.....
Tel. no. ....		Date.....

Please complete in block capitals and send to:  
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# 17/RACING

## McCoy: the mighty man with the 10-year plan

The jump jockey Tony McCoy is charging towards domination of his sport at an alarming rate. His critics say he will fall victim to burn-out. McCoy says maybe, but not for 10 years.

As he marches contemptuously through his fourth season in Britain, Tony McCoy is closing in on 600 career winners. At this remorseless rate the Irishman will not only beat Peter Scudamore's career record of 1,678 winners, he will exceed it by a further 1,000 at his anticipated point of retirement in 10 years' time. A P McCoy describes Richard Dunwoody as the most obsessive jockey in the weighing room. He must be joking.

Anthony Peter McCoy has ridden so many winners already that he seems to have been around for a generation. It is quite arresting, however, to consider that his first ever hurdles race, at Leopardstown, was on the day Jodami and Mark Dwyer won the Cheltenham Gold Cup. Since then there has been the conditional jockeys' championship in his first campaign over the Irish Sea, followed by two titles among the fully-fledged ranks. Earlier this year McCoy, aged 22, became only the fourth man to ride the winner of the Champion Hurdle (Make A Stand) and Gold Cup (Mr Mulligan) at the same Cheltenham Festival. His bookie is now generally accepted as providing his mount with a fifth leg.

Yet his achievements do not count as a speck of grit for Tony McCoy. As the bandwagon rolls on, he would prefer to crack the whip on the team ahead rather than look at the mileposts in his slipstream. "I don't want to look back or even think about the present and how I'm flying, because that's the moment you fall over and make yourself look like a clown," he says. "Your luck can only last a certain amount of time, so you're frightened to look back and see how long it's been going on. I've been very lucky so far. What matters to me now is tomorrow."

what I'm going to ride on Saturday and possible winners at Cheltenham this season." And, of course, the Christmas sales of his recently published biography.

If you look in the past, though, you find what has made this near-mechanical man before us. The son of a Catholic horse breeder from Toomebridge, Co Antrim, McCoy was brought up as one of six in bucolic Ulster, close to the inland sea of Loch Neagh and on the banks of Northern Ireland's longest river, the Bann.

By the time he was 12, McCoy was an unfettered truant, spending most of the day at the yard of a local man, Billy Rock. He could ride, and control, the biggest horses almost immediately and would earn £100 a week for his effort. "He could do the work of three grown men," Rock says.

McCoy was not a daft lad, but the subject he enjoyed most was not on the school curriculum.

BY RICHARD EDMONDSON

lun. He left at 14 without a single O-level to his name and joined the Flat yard of Jim Bolger. Coolcullen has produced some mighty racing names, both human and equine, and none was brought up gently. If anyone is caught smoking at the yard, Jim Bolger does not ask the staff to form a seated circle to discuss the topic. He boots the miscreant out. McCoy does not smoke to this day and the strongest brew he takes is diet coke.

The jockey found his master as terrifying as a tiger in the bedroom and it is testimony to his fortitude that he disobeyed Bolger in moving to Britain in 1994. By then the tyro had broken his leg on the Coolcullen gallops, an accident that erased any lingering notion that McCoy would appear on the Flat. During recuperation his body started to change and did not stop until it reached its present shape, as if its owner had been played on the dungeon rack while a particularly nasty shift was on.



The real McCoy: "I can't imagine there is a single jockey in the weighing room who wouldn't like to be suffering from the sort of burn-out I'm supposed to be getting at the moment"

McCoy's favourite steaks and chops are now off the carte du jour (although the way things are going they may soon be off all our menus). The jockey has attempted the black techniques of pee pills and sticking his fingers down the throat, but now just settles for surviving on various natural gases. "My weight is a worse problem than for most jockeys because I'm five foot 11 inches," he says. "But I've got used to it and I can live with the fact that, for the rest of my days riding, I'm never going to wake up in a morning and have a fried breakfast. It just won't happen."

His physique apart, Tony McCoy is made notable by a jut-

ting chin, snooker hall complexion and the sort of retro haircut they used to display in bands such as *Cherry Tip*. He has a capacity for self-sacrifice that comes to few. For him the grind, the hunger and the travelling of his sport is surpassed by the rewards, financial and emotional, of winning. "You've got to want winners, be greedy, and I don't mean being ignorant greedy," he says. "You've got to want success every day, and when you get it that makes you greedy for some more."

There are some who believe the McCoy way does not foster a lengthy career, that the starving, 70,000 miles travelling a year and high expectation will

soon put him in the sidings. The jockey himself, who would rather have a finger off than a day, sports at this theory.

"I can't imagine there is a single jockey in the weighing room who wouldn't like to be suffering from the sort of burn-out I'm supposed to be getting at the moment," he says. "I love going racing every day, especially as I usually get two or three really decent chances. I think a lot of people get more burned out thinking about what I'm doing than I do going through it."

"I can cope with feeling as burned-out as this for the next 10 years if things keep happening for me. There will plen-

ty of time for me to relax in 10 years' time when I can't ride horses any longer. But tomorrow is another day, never mind 10 years' time. If I keep riding consistently for another 10 years I'll be the happiest man alive, but when you're a jump jockey your fingers are permanently crossed."

"This is a game that becomes obsessive and when you ride winners consistently it's something you want more and more every day. Anyone in my position would become obsessive too, but maybe it was being that way that got me here in the first place."

By The Real McCoy: Hodder & Stoughton £16.99

## L is for...



GREG WOOD  
THE A-Z  
OF BETTING

Law: Of which there is about as much in the world of betting as there was in Tombstone before Wyatt Earp rode into town. Bets are considered to be a private matter of honour, and thus beyond the reach of the courts on the basis that, well, Good Gawd, if you can't trust a man's word, don't y'know, harrumph, harrumph, what in blazes can you trust? This was all fine and dandy in the days when Lord X would pit his best colt against that of Lord Y for a modest side-bet of, say, half of Gloucestershire, before heading off to string up an adolescent or two for sheep-stealing. In 1997, when British consumers are, by and large, fairly well protected against the less scrupulous members of the business world, it is hopelessly inadequate and thus, you might suppose, an obvious concern for a go-ahead Government with a mandate for change. Early indications, however, are that New Labour is as indifferent to our problems as the last lot.

Ladies' race: And also for Lydia Pearce, whose pre-eminence in such events was something of a blank cheque for punters through much of the 1990s. Races for amateur riders of either sex are generally contested by poor, unreliable individuals of very doubtful stamina - and sadly, the horses are even worse. As such, they are hardly the ideal betting medium, but if you always back the best jockey, you can usually be sure that, whatever other shortcomings the beast may have, it is the best part of a stone well-in with its rivals. Unfortunately, Mrs Pearce's career is now seems to be drawing to a close, but one heir apparent is Emma Ramsden, (that's Ramsden, as in the trainer Lynda and Jack, her professional gambler husband).

Lent, not lost: Arguably the most stupid aphorism ever invented, even in the rich breeding ground for cod philosophy that is the average betting shop. Your selection has been beaten but it didn't get a clear run, needed further, ran green and/or (it's usually and) the jockey was a jerk. Thus, the money you backed it with is lent, not lost, and will undoubtedly be repaid, with generous interest, in the not too distant future.

This belief also appears in Chapter One of the Teach Yourself Guide to Economics, by Nick Leeson. Ladbroke's: Established in 1886 in the Warwickshire village from which it takes its name, Ladbroke's moved its operation to London well before the First World War, where it cultivated a clientele which was the complete opposite of that which it pitched to today. Snooty to the point of rudeness about who they would do business with.

Ladbroke's were turf accountants to the aristocracy (and even now, so rumour has it, several members of the Royal family would not dream of punting with anyone else). From their credit office in Burlington Street, Ladbroke's were purveyors of a scale that would be matched only by the introduction of death duty, a couple of generations later. The business plan changed radically, however, when Cyril Stein, son of the legendary pre-war rails bookmaker Snooty Parker, took over as chairman in 1966. Stein was quick to appreciate the potential of off-course betting shops, which had been legalised five years earlier, and through a combination of tireless acquisition and an approach to the competition which was straight out of *Jaws*, built the firm into Britain's biggest bookie, before expanding elsewhere. "Is that the best deal you've ever done?" he was famously asked after adding Hilton Hotels to the Ladbroke's portfolio for £645 million in 1987. "It's the best deal anyone's ever done," Cyril replied, and even in the post-Stein years, his firm exhibits the same egalitarian willingness to impoverish anyone, whatever their class.

Loch Ness Monster: The proven existence of which is 500-1 with William Hill, a price that must surely persuade even the most glib of Sassenachs that the Scottish Tourist Board has been having them on these past 60 years. Novelty odds on such events as aliens landing in Trafalgar Square, Lord Lucan turning himself in to the police or Manchester City winning the Premiership are generally nothing more than an easy source of silly season publicity for the bookies, and of no interest at all to serious punters. A few optimists, though, have 500-1 about a British winner of the men's singles at Wimbledon before the turn of the century safely hidden away - (the price is now down to single figures). When Mecca took over William Hill a few years ago, meanwhile, only one major stumbling block emerged when the accounts went through Hill's books. The multi-million pound buyout is said to have come close to stalling - because Mecca did not want to take on Hill's £3m liability over the reappearance of Elvis.

## Flagship to be the leading light on a day of riches

The Festival arrives early at Sandown on a day which offers punters a serious alternative to numbers and fruit machines. Greg Wood studies the form.

Amid the backslapping at Coral headquarters as the bookmakers revealed profits of £33m this week, there was a message for racing which offered less cause for celebration.

This pile of cash was not the result of punters jostling their way into Coral shops to bet on the horses, but rather a result

of the low-cost, high-margin new arrivals in betting shops like 49s and slot machines. Since bookies pay a levy to racing only on racing turnover, this is not a trend they are likely to disturb. The turf's market share among off-course gamblers, so the bookmakers will tell you, will continue to decline, and since they are doing everything possible to shift punters to betting mediums with much fatter and guaranteed profits, it could be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

On an afternoon like today, though, racing can still stand toe-to-toe against any other attraction. The Sandown card alone is arguably the most at-

tractive weekend fixture firms this side of Aintree, and what with the Grade Two Rehearsal Chase at Chesham and two good all-weather races from Wolverhampton, there are nine

RICHARD EDMONDSON  
NAP: Princeliff (Sandown 3.05)  
NB: Ambleside (Chesham 3.20)

televised races in the space of two and a half hours.

The Tingle Creek Chase brings together three of the first four home in last year's Queen Mother Champion Chase, and two chasers in Mulligan and Or-

Royal with the potential to line up for that race next time around. Klaron Davis is expected to set off a warm favourite, but the worry for his supporters must be that he does not find his best form until the spring. There is also a suspicion that, when the ground is not testing and the pace not strong, two miles is a bit sharp for him. Klaron Davis may be vulnerable today, and Viking Flagship (next best 2.30) is an obvious value bet.

Adrian Maguire, David Nicholson's stable jockey, chooses Mulligan, but then, he did that a few weeks ago and Viking Flagship beat him. Mu-

ligan should have improved for that, but Viking Flagship, too, has every right to come on.

The Grade Two Henry VIII Novice Chase - won by Mulligan 12 months ago - is fiercely competitive, with Chief's Song (1.55) only a tentative choice, while the William Hill Handicap Hurdle also appears - at first sight anyway - to be a

debutant. This is more than just another handicap, with Celtic Shot and, last year, Make A Stand both winning this on the way to the Champion Hurdle.

Crimes, the right capable of making similar improvement, debuted home on his seasonal debut at Leopardstown in De-

cember, and is just 7lb higher today. His chance is obvious, but in such a big field, others make more appeal at the prices. NEW INN (next best 3.05) must be the bet at 33-1. He has returned in fine form this season and has the leading young rider Seamus Durack taking 5lb off his back. Elsewhere, Betts Life (2.15) could be the value in the Rehearsal Chase, while Given-time (1.45) also stands every chance. Centre Stalls would be a certainty for the Wulfrun Stakes at Wolverhampton where it runs at grass, but may be worth approving with Farmost (1.20), proven on Fibresand.

Results, page 21

### WETHERBY

12.40 Ardronan 1.10 Edelweiss Du Moulin 1.40 No More Hassle 2.10 Strath Royal 2.40 Real Ton 3.15 Second Fiddle

GOING: Good to Soft.  
• Off-hand overcast. Run-in of 200yds slightly uphill.  
• Course is NE of town on B1228 near junction of A58 and A1.  
• ADVICE: Club C12 (accompanied under 16s free), Tattersalls, Course C12, 1.10-1.40 (2.15), 2.10-2.40 (2.15), 2.40-3.15 (2.15), 3.15-3.40 (2.15), 3.40-4.10 (2.15), 4.10-4.40 (2.15), 4.40-5.10 (2.15), 5.10-5.40 (2.15), 5.40-6.10 (2.15), 6.10-6.40 (2.15), 6.40-7.10 (2.15), 7.10-7.40 (2.15), 7.40-8.10 (2.15), 8.10-8.40 (2.15), 8.40-9.10 (2.15), 9.10-9.40 (2.15), 9.40-10.10 (2.15), 10.10-10.40 (2.15), 10.40-11.10 (2.15), 11.10-11.40 (2.15), 11.40-12.10 (2.15), 12.10-12.40 (2.15), 12.40-1.10 (2.15), 1.10-1.40 (2.15), 1.40-2.10 (2.15), 2.10-2.40 (2.15), 2.40-3.15 (2.15), 3.15-3.40 (2.15), 3.40-4.10 (2.15), 4.10-4.40 (2.15), 4.40-5.10 (2.15), 5.10-5.40 (2.15), 5.40-6.10 (2.15), 6.10-6.40 (2.15), 6.40-7.10 (2.15), 7.10-7.40 (2.15), 7.40-8.10 (2.15), 8.10-8.40 (2.15), 8.40-9.10 (2.15), 9.10-9.40 (2.15), 9.40-10.10 (2.15), 10.10-10.40 (2.15), 10.40-11.10 (2.15), 11.10-11.40 (2.15), 11.40-12.10 (2.15), 12.10-12.40 (2.15), 12.40-1.10 (2.15), 1.10-1.40 (2.15), 1.40-2.10 (2.15), 2.10-2.40 (2.15), 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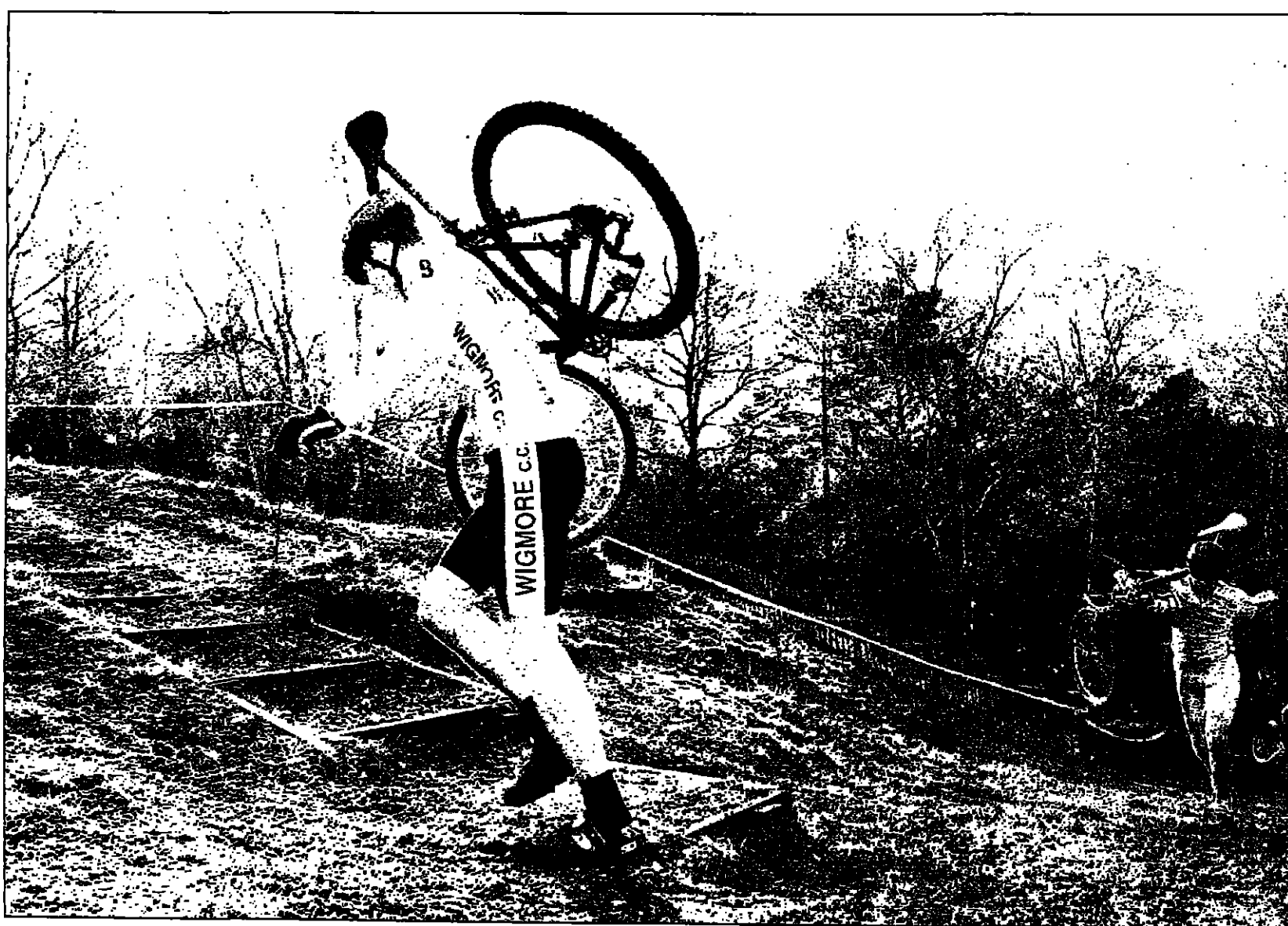








# 20/PHOTO-SHOOT



## The mad, muddy world of cyclo-cross

Cycling is generally regarded as a summer sport, but the arrival of rain, wind and snow does not put a brake on the action. Cyclo-cross riders relish the challenging weather conditions, as spectators at the recent Open London Cyclo-Cross Championships at Addington Hills in Surrey discovered.

Cyclo-cross riders tackle cross-country courses in which the terrain is often so rough that they have to pick up their bikes and carry them. There are obvious similarities with mountain bike racing, but in competition terms there is one key factor that keeps them apart: mountain bikes generally have much wider tyres and are considerably heavier.

To underline how much crossover there is between the two sports, the London event was won by Manchester's Nick Craig, the current national mountain bike champion.

The London championship is one of the most important events on the cyclo-cross calendar and it again attracted a large crowd. The competition featured some 80 riders, including teams from the Netherlands and Belgium.

The course is regarded as one of the toughest in the sport. In the senior event riders had to complete eight laps of a three-kilometre circuit, Craig winning in a time of just over one hour and four minutes. Roger Hammond, the former world junior champion, was third and took the prize as the first London rider home.

The veterans' event (over six laps) was won by Peter Smith, with Peter Middlehurst taking the junior title (over five laps).



## PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT HALLAM









## Major weekend football fixtures and pools check

### TODAY

**FA Carling Premiership**  
1 Aston Villa v Coventry City  
2 Blackburn v Bolton  
3 Derby v West Ham  
4 Leeds v Everton  
5 Leicester v Crystal Palace  
6 Liverpool v Man Utd (11:05)  
7 Newcastle v Arsenal  
8 Tottenham v Chelsea

**Nationwide League First Division**  
9 Bury v Middlesbrough  
10 Crewe v Huddersfield  
11 Manchester City v Wolves  
12 Nottm Forest v Sheffield Utd  
13 Port Vale v Birmingham  
14 Portsmouth v Stoke  
15 QPR v Sunderland  
16 Reading v Charlton  
17 Swindon v Oxford  
18 Tranmere v Ipswich  
19 West Brom v Stockport

**Third Division**  
Scarborough v Rochdale

**FA Cup second round**  
20 Colchester v Haverford  
21 Charlton v Boreham Wood  
22 Fulham v Southend  
23 Huddersfield v Darlington  
24 Macclesfield v Walsall  
25 Cheltenham v Blackpool  
26 Peterborough v Doncaster  
27 Preston v Notts County  
28 Rotherham v King's Lynn  
29 Scunthorpe v Boston  
30 Grimsby v Chesterfield  
31 Torquay v Watford  
32 Wigan v York  
33 Cambridge Utd v Stevenage  
34 Cardiff v Hendon  
35 Lincoln City v Exeter  
36 Northampton v Blackpool  
37 Walsby v Bristol Rovers

**Auto Windscreens Shield Northern first round**  
Shrewsbury v Hartlepool

**Bell's Scottish League Premier Division**  
33 Aberdeen v St Johnstone  
34 Dundee United v Dundee  
35 Hearts v Motherwell (2:30)  
36 Kilmarnock v Celtic

**First Division**  
37 Aberdeen v Dundee  
38 Falkirk v Partick  
39 Raith v Morton  
40 St Mirren v Livingston  
41 Stirling Albion v Ayr

**Third Division**  
Ayr v East Stirling

**Tennents Scottish Cup First round**  
42 Cowdenbeath v Moray  
43 East Fife v Stranraer  
44 Fraserburgh v Clyde  
45 Inverness CTV v Whitehill

**GM Vauxhall Conference**  
46 Halifax v Salford  
47 Huddersfield v York  
48 Kidderminster v Dover  
49 Southport v Leam  
50 Woking v Kettering  
51 Played yesterday

**Dr Martens League Premier Division**  
46 Huddersfield v Salford  
47 Kidderminster v Dover  
48 Southport v Leam  
49 Woking v Kettering  
50 Played yesterday

### TOMORROW

**FA Carling Premiership**  
Wendavon v Southampton (4:0)

**FA Cup second round**  
Bournemouth v Bristol City (4:0)

**Bell's Scottish League Premier Division**  
Rangers v Hibernian

## Wanchope's wierd route to renaissance man

Two and a half years ago Paulo Wanchope was on a basketball scholarship at the University of Southern California. A career in football was not in his plans, let alone in Derby, a town he had never heard of. Today he is being hailed as one of the Premiership's most promising foreign legionnaires, which seems only appropriate for a man whose middle name is Cesar. Nick Harris reports.

A 21-year-old, 6ft 4in Costa Rican has entranced English football this season. Baffling his arms and intriguing observers with the efficiency of his irregular style, Paulo Wanchope's spontaneity gives foreign imports a good name.

On his Derby County debut, against Manchester United at Old Trafford in April, he produced one of his trademark gangly runs, fended off all attempts to dispossess him by dodging and weaving, and finished the move with a measured left-foot shot. Derby won the match 3-2, inflicting on the champions one of only four Premiership home defeats since 1992.

Wanchope, slayer in conversation than on the pitch, seems genuinely modest as he recalls the game. "Really against Manchester United I didn't beat a lot of players," he said. "I took the ball straight into the box. If I have the space, I try to go." His analysis does not do full justice to his methods, but he concedes that his first sport has influenced his game.

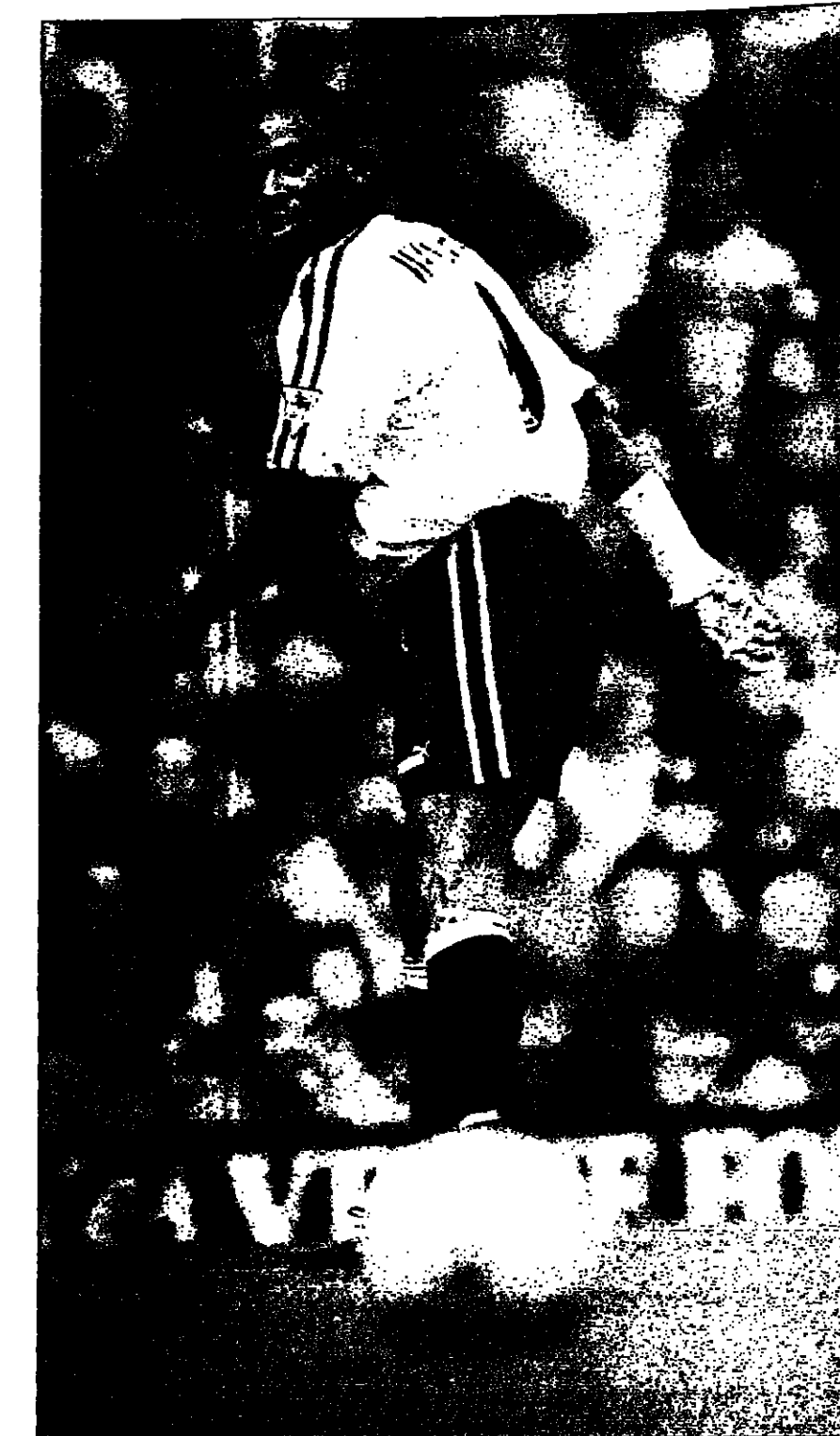
"Sometimes I make the moves of a basketball player to get away from a defender or to use my arms in the box, so it's very important." The statistics certainly suggest this is beneficial. Despite a cartilage injury that kept him out of the game for four months, he returned to action 11 weeks ago and has scored 10 goals in 12 games since.

As a teenager, the aspiring hoop-shooter left Costa Rica for west coast America. By 17, he had won a sports scholarship, and at 18, all he thought about was basketball. Then he went home for a holiday and was spotted playing football with his friends. "The manager of Herediano [one of Costa Rica's leading sides] saw me play and he asked 'Who's that player?'. And he gave me the opportunity to be in a professional team and I decided to stay."

Within weeks he was a first-team regular and within months he was drafted into the national squad for his country's World Cup qualifying campaign, where his performance against the United States attracted the attention of ex-Arsenal defender and part-time agent, Bob McNab. In January this year, McNab arranged a trial for Wanchope (and his compatriot Mauricio Solis) at Queen's Park Rangers. The pair were rejected, but McNab telephoned his old friend Jim Smith and the Derby manager did not hesitate in signing them both.

Thus far Smith appears to have done little to temper his new star's flamboyance and has settled for telling him where to play, but not how. "The manager cannot do anything in the game. [He] cannot be near you telling you 'do this' or 'do that' specifically. You have to be spontaneous," Wanchope said. It is something he believes Smith sees as an asset rather than a problem. "He signed me because he saw that my style is good. If I change my style it's not Wanchope." (For the record, he pronounces his name "Wancho-pay"). "It would be very boring if a player always does the same. And it will be easy to defend if you always do the same."

He adds that his style does occasionally upset Smith, but ultimately he believes the end of his attacks justifies their means. "Sometimes he [Smith] argues with me when I don't do it simple or when I don't pass the ball. But that's part of the game, because if I take three or four [players] and score, nobody says nothing, but if I take two



The Wanchope creed is 'you have to be spontaneous' Photograph: David Ashdown

or three and lose the ball, that's the risk of the game. We have to take the chance. If the striker doesn't take the chance, you never score."

Wanchope's role in Derby's recent renaissance is part of a wider internationalisation of the club. He is one of 11 overseas players currently in the squad, but sees their common aim as a uniting factor rather than their diverse origins being a barrier. "In football there is a football language that is always the same. It's not a problem," he said. He appears to genuinely relish be-

ing a part of the Pride Park set-up. "It's very exciting. We have a good stadium and it's nice to play in a full house with a good pitch, good team-mates. So I'm very proud to be in Derby."

He was also proud to have represented his country in World Cup qualifying, and despite the disappointment of his side not making it to France next year, he can take some consolation that he was Costa Rica's highest goalscorer as Mexico, the US and the Reggae Boyz of Jamaica progressed ahead of them.

His immediate ambitions in English football are clear. "For this team to be in Europe and to end in the top six in the League," he said. He added: "And to score lots of goals. And I don't like to say how much goals I'll score. I only wait until the season is finished and I'll see."

Whether or not he can match the strike-rate of the Premiership's leading goalscorer (and his opposite number for West Ham today, John Hartson) remains to be seen, but at least it will be exciting watching him try.

## Success comes before beauty

FAN'S EYE VIEW  
NO 235  
LINCOLN CITY BY GARY PARLE

Saturday 22 November 1997, 5.05pm or thereabouts. A car full of fans somewhere in Colchester.

The tension had been mounting ever since James Alexander Gordon had read out the results of Exeter City and Notts County. Both had drawn. Barely had he said Peterborough United than we knew by the tone of his voice that they had also drawn.

"We are top of the League," chorused five voices in unison. Such was the excitement that we missed our turning and paid an unscheduled visit to Colchester town centre. Never mind, because Lincoln City were top for the first time in several seasons.

Two seasons ago such a position at the head of the Third Division was unthinkable. On the pitch we were in a similar position to Doncaster Rovers, well adrift of the pack, but off it we had none of the problems that blight Rovers. After sacking two managers in 42 days, John Reames, the City chairman, turned to a man who had been out of the game since he was sacked by Preston North End after seven successive defeats - John Beck.

Beck is probably one of the most loathed managers in football - at least by fans at any clubs other than Cambridge and Preston. His appointment wasn't exactly greeted with enthusiasm by City fans, but he kept his promise to keep us in the League.

In his two years at Sincil Bank he has attracted controversy, but on the positive side he has brought to Sincil Bank a set of players who do not easily accept defeat and, interestingly for those who despise him, many of them have played for him in the past. If fans don't like him at least there is no shortage of players prepared to play under him at more than one stage in their careers.

Beck's game plan is simple. Every player is a team player who knows where every other player will be at any time. The ball is moved into the opposition's defensive third as quickly as possible with the aim of winning throw-ins, corners or creating a scoring chance. One loan signing this season failed to make an impact because he was an individual and wouldn't conform.

Some might say such a system produces players who are nothing more than robots, but the sale of Gareth Ainsworth to Port Vale for £500,000 proves that individual talent can still shine in a disciplined set-up.

It doesn't always work and many times a long ball up field fails to find its target, or its intended target hasn't done his job and is out of position. The result is an endless chorus of boos and cries of "Play it to feet".

It isn't pretty to watch at times, but it is effective. Opposition managers and even City fans say it is so predictable, but if that is the case why do most teams struggle to cope with it?

This season the goals haven't flowed for City which is unusual for a Beck side. He keeps reminding us that at Cambridge he produced sides who were top scorers in the country for several seasons. Our paltry tally of 20 in 19 games (up to 22 November) is countered by a defensive record of conceding just 14 and keeping seven consecutive clean sheets away from home.

Being top in November, while very nice and far preferable to being bottom, will mean nothing in May. There is room for improvement, not least in scoring.

Many Lincoln fans will continue to moan about how City play and Beck will still be reviled by fans around the country, but if we are still singing "We are top of the League" in May then who really cares?

## Harford can take QPR job

The West Bromwich Albion manager, Ray Harford, is free to take over at Queen's Park Rangers after an "amicable agreement" at the High Court yesterday.

Albion were due to go before a judge in chambers today for an injunction preventing Harford, who resigned late on Wednesday evening, from moving. But after discussions outside court, the two first division clubs issued a joint statement that they had reached an "amicable agreement", as a result of which Harford was free to join QPR "with immediate effect".

Albion had initially refused to accept this resignation, claiming that they required six months' notice of his intention to leave. Harford and club executives would make no further comment "at this stage".

West Bromwich put their chief scout, Richie Barker, in caretaker charge of team affairs following Harford's resigna-

tion. Barker, a former assistant manager at Sheffield Wednesday and manager at Shrewsbury, Stoke and Notts County, was appointed as Albion's chief scout by Harford in September.

Albion's coach, John Treweek, remains the club's No 2 as Albion begin the search to find their third manager of the year. John Barnwell, chief executive of the League Managers' Association, said the case highlighted the need for a code of conduct in the Premiership.

"When the Premier League was formed in 1992 we set down with the new chief executive Rick Parry and drew up a set of rules which have worked very well for both parties," he said. "It's very regrettable that the clubs should lock horns legally over this and we feel a code of conduct would eliminate these undignified squabbles. The LMA believe if managers and

clubs abided by a code of conduct in the Football League, with the final word resting with an independent tribunal, it would eradicate such disputes.

"For the LMA it just flags up what we have been saying about the need for a code of practice to be included in the Football League rules."

● Liverpool's teenage striker Michael Owen has been called into the England Under-21 squad for the first time to try and help salvage their hopes of reaching the European Championship finals. Owen is included for the second leg of the play-off with Greece at Carrow Road on December 17 when England must overcome a two-goal deficit.

England won their qualifying group by seven points but scored only seven goals in eight group matches, with another blank in the play-off first leg in Crete.

—Jon Culley  
England Under-21 squad, Sporting Digest, page 21

## Women of Tehran storm stadium in defiant mood



AROUND THE WORLD  
BY RUPERT METCALF

**IRAN**  
Tens of thousands of Iranian football fans, including women who ignored an official order banning their presence, packed Tehran's Azadi stadium on Tuesday to welcome home the national squad, who qualified for next year's World Cup finals last weekend.

An estimated 70,000 flag-waving fans, with about 3,000 young women in their midst, cheered their team. Observers said the women rushed through gates despite police attempts to enforce a ban on female fans attending the event. Once inside, they were seated in separate stands from the male fans.

State radio and television earlier read a statement by the Iranian Football Federation saying women would not be admitted into the stadium.

"In view of the lack of suitable space and in order to safeguard Islamic dignity, sisters will be strictly prevented from entering the Azadi stadium," the statement declared. "Sisters can witness the fervent ceremonies [on live television] at home."

In 1994 Iran briefly suspended the ban on women going to football stadiums, which dates back to the 1979 revolution which toppled the Shah. But the authorities reimposed the ban after a few weeks following protests by conservative Islamist newspapers, which said the women's presence was at odds with norms of contacts between the sexes.

Iranian football administrators have said that the ban was partly prompted by the "immoral" language and behaviour of some fans, which they claimed made football

games unsuitable as family outings.

Meanwhile, despite Valdeir Vieira's success in steering Iran to the finals, it looks as though he will be replaced as coach soon.

According to the president of the Iranian football federation, Dariush Mostafavi, the Brazilian "was appointed as a temporary coach, and we are looking for a new coach."

Vieira had just been appointed as Iran's Olympic team coach when he took charge of the national team after the former coach, Mohammad Mayeli Kohan, was sacked last month.

"After the huge celebrations we owe it to our people to raise our standards," Mostafavi said. He named Johan Cruyff and Carlos Bilardo, the former coach of Argentina, as possible targets.

### BRAZIL

Away from the World Cup, club football continues as "normal" in South America.

A horrendous tackle by the Argentinian international midfielder, Sergio Berti, marred the first leg of the South American Supercup final on Thursday as Argentina's River Plate held on for a 0-0 draw away to São Paulo in Brazil.

Berti raised his left foot and kicked the São Paulo midfielder Alexandre in the genitals early in the second half. He was instantly sent off by the otherwise tolerant Chilean referee, Mario Sanchez.

"That was criminal," the former Brazilian international Rivelino, who was commenting for television, said. "If he [Berti] had hit Alexandre's knee, he would have crippled the lad."



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## 23/FOOTBALL

## Franzi's got a dull reputation but he's actually a laugh-a-minute guy

THE  
GAFFER  
TAPES

Strange goings on at the Old Cornfield this week. I arrived for training on Monday to find a Mercedes parked in my spot and a bloke in the driver's seat. I went to have a quiet word only to discover this fellow spoke a different language, the language of the gun.

Anyway, after I'd left the motor in Tesco's car park over the road I came back to find three of his mates in a meeting with the chairman. All were wearing big coats, thick moustaches and bulges where most people keep their wallets. Either Mark Lawrenson, Graeme Souness and Tom Sellick were joining the board or there was something even more sinister going on.

Miss Moneyecu, our latest secretary, explained they were a party of Belarus businessmen who wanted to buy the club. They were offering a cash deposit - in a variety of currencies. They didn't need a receipt as they were sure Sir Hiram Firem's word was his bond.

This is not generally regarded as the case: even the Chichester Club won't allow him a slate at the bar anymore, but Dave the barman tends not to settle his debts in blood - I suspect these guys will.

Sir Hiram was not quite convinced about the deal and, once I discovered they intended to bring in their own manager, neither was I - we've enough foreign coaches already. So I nipped off to make a quick call to the local nick. Minutes later Inspector Cools drove up in full dress uniform. We introduced him with a nod and a wink as the club's "security officer", and they made their excuses and left.

This was probably a good thing as we've a special visitor today. Apparently Prince Harry wasn't too impressed by Arsenal last week so he's come to watch us instead - he thinks there'll be more goals, though I think he's a bit cheeky asking to go in the away end so he can enjoy them.

We were going to carpet the away end in red shagpile (personally tested by Miss Moneyecu and I), erect a special canopy over his seat, and invite him in an executive box for pre- and post-match tea and truffles. But the brat insists on being treated just like an ordinary fan. So we've arranged for him to sit behind a pillar next to a foul-mouthed anti-royalist bigot. On the other side will be an incontinent pensioner who'll get up to go to the toilet whenever an attack develops and spill Bovril over Harry just after the Prince has spent so long queuing for a CJD-burger that's he's missed the only goal of the game.

Some of our most accurate hooligans will be siming coins at him - with his mum's face upwards - and, after the game, the police'll keep him behind for an hour. Let's hope it's raining and the supporters' bus gets bricked, then he can have the full experience.

I left the arrangements in

Miss Moneyecu's firm but tender hands and headed for Marseilles where I helped Franz prepare the Europe side for the World Cup draw exhibition match. Franz and I go way back; we used to ski together in Kitzbühl. I still treasure the get-well card he sent me after I broke my leg when he led me off piste. For his part he says he still remembers the sore head he had the following year when I led him on the piste.

Franzi's got a dull reputation but he's actually a laugh-a-minute type. No sooner had I checked into my hotel and checked out the bar than I came back to my room to discover he'd draped towels over the TV, the mini-bar and the trouser press. I had to respond so I got down to training early, had a quiet word with the lads, and when Franz arrived they all came out of the dressing-rooms goose-stepping - Incey was brilliant while Köpke was a natural. Franz

cracked up and wanted to do it on the night but FIFA said no - what spoilsports.

I took the opportunity to have a quick word with Ronaldo and his agents. They said if we could rustle up £30m he'd love to play at the Old Cornfield. So the chairman's off to Belarus on Monday.

We've already raised a couple of million: Keegan's signed the tea lady and groundsman for Fulham. We were going to bring in a couple of YTS kids to replace them but there have been a few problems - the new tea girl ran over Shaun Prone with her trolley and bruised his hip while Ivor Niggle's twisted his ankle in a hole the groundsman had dug. Apparently he was keeping his fags there in case he fancied a drag while mowing the grass. So, that's those two out for today's game. Wonder if Harry's bought his boots.

Barry Gaffer was talking to  
Glenn Moore

Full Speed ahead  
for Newcastle

As Everton languish at the foot of the Premiership, their captain, Gary Speed may be about to move to Newcastle United. Alan Nixon reports.

Kenny Dalglish is making a £5m offer for the Everton captain, Gary Speed. The Newcastle United manager is ready to take on Ron Atkinson in the race for the unsettled Welsh international midfielder.

Speed has had talks with his manager, Howard Kendall, who is naturally not keen on losing him, and there will be no sale before what is likely to be a stormy AGM on Monday, but the deal could happen soon afterwards. Dalglish, who is also keen on Norwich's injured Keith O'Neill, is short of left-sided players, and the Welsh captain has kept on top of his game this season despite Everton's problems.

Sheffield Wednesday are also keen on Speed, but Atkinson is not in a position to match Newcastle. He could offer players in exchange, however.

Atkinson yesterday made his first signing since returning as manager of Wednesday three weeks ago, buying the Swedish international Niclas Alexander-

sson for £750,000 from IFK Gothenburg.

Aston Villa's manager, Brian Little, was known to be chasing the 25-year-old, along with the Leeds United manager, George Graham. Alexander, however, will have to wait a week to make his debut as the club have not received international clearance in time for him to play against Barnsley on Monday.

The 26-year-old Alexander, who has signed a three-and-a-half year deal and will watch his new club against Barnsley, will be expected to provide goals from midfield, having scored seven in 25 games for Gothenburg and three for Sweden.

Chelsea have signed a £75m deal with a finance house which will enable them to buy Stamford Bridge from the estate of the late Matthew Harding. The deal, based on a 10-year investment bond from SBC Wurzburg Dillon Read, will also mean the club can clear their debts and complete the redevelopment of the stadium.

The Aston Villa goalkeeper, Mark Bosnich, has received a Uefa Cup reprieve from the Australia coach, Terry Venables. He was due to fly out on Monday with the other English-based players in Venables' squad to play in the Confederations Cup in Saudi Arabia, but Venables has

given Bosnich, who missed three Villa games while on World Cup play-off duty, an extra 48 hours so he can play against Steaua Bucharest on Tuesday.

The Coventry chairman, Bryan Richardson, was making another attempt yesterday to lure the Liverpool midfielder, Michael Thomas, to Highfield Road. Thomas turned down Coventry's first approach, as he wants to return to London.

Manchester United's captain, Roy Keane, injured against Leeds in September, may play before the end of the season. Keane's cruciate ligament operation is now adjudged successful, and the injury may mend by May.

The former England, Liverpool and Tottenham striker, Paul Walsh, has retired because of a knee injury. Walsh, 35, suffered ligament damage playing for Portsmouth last year.

In an 18-year career he won a League Championship and FA Cup winner's medal, and played five times for England. He has been working as a players' agent since surgery failed to repair the knee and hopes to move into management.

Charlton Athletic's Jamie Stuart has tested positive for cocaine and marijuana. He is the fifth Charlton player to test positive for drugs.

— Alan Nixon



Gary Speed: Wanted by Kenny Dalglish and Ron Atkinson

Photograph: Emics

## FA CUP SECOND ROUND

## Walker and Dixon looking to roll back the years

Places in the third round of the FA Cup are at stake this weekend. Paul Newman expects some upsets along the way.

When Clive Walker and Kerry Dixon were team-mates at Chelsea in the early 1980s they can hardly have imagined they would be renewing their acquaintance in the FA Cup some 14 years later. This afternoon, however, the two men meet when Cheltenham Town entertain Boreham Wood with one of football's great prizes at stake - a place in the Cup's third round.

Walker, now aged 40, came off Cheltenham's substitutes' bench last month to score the winner against Tiverton Town in the first round. On the opposing bench today will be Dixon,

36, who left Doncaster Rovers at the start of the season and joined his local club in order to keep fit. Dixon came on in the fourth qualifying round against Rushden & Diamonds and will again be a substitute today.

The Cheltenham-Boreham Wood tie ensures that there will be at least one non-League club in tomorrow afternoon's third round draw, which will be televised live by ITV at 6.15. However, it will be a surprise if there are not more.

Three GM Vauxhall Conference teams, Hednesford Town, Stevenage Borough and Hereford United, will all fancy their chances against opponents from the bottom half of the Third Division: Darlington, Cambridge United and Colchester respectively.

Hednesford have been insisting this week that Darlington

should be the favourites, but the Third Division sided needed a replay, extra time and penalties to dispose of Solihull Borough in the last round and Hednesford have an exceptional Cup record over the last two years.

Last season the Staffordshire side gave Middlesbrough a scare after knocking out Blackpool and York, and in this season's first round they won away at Mark Hately's Hull. Hednesford are second in the Conference, effectively just five places behind Darlington.

Stevenage go to Cambridge, who have been sliding down the Third Division table in recent weeks. On the equivalent day last year Stevenage won at Leyton Orient while Cambridge lost at home to Woking.

Hereford travel to Colchester but will be without the injured Jan Foster, who was one of the

heroes of their first-round victory over Brighton, which avenged the defeat that cost Graham Turner's team their League status earlier this year.

Emley's chances of beating Lincoln City have not been helped by injuries to key players, but the UniBond League club should take heart from Lincoln's unimpressive performance in the last round. Gainsborough Trinity took the Third Division team to a replay, which they only lost 3-2.

King's Lynn, once a major power in non-League football, will relish the trip to Rotherham United, while their East Anglian neighbours, Wisbech Town, are playing in the second round for only the second time in their history. On the last occasion, 40 years ago, they lost 2-1 at Reading.

Wisbech are expecting to

give Bristol Rovers a run for their money. Gary Childs, manager of the Dr Martens League Midland Division side, says that Rovers "are a footballing side and that will suit us because that's the way we play. We've got players all over the pitch capable of scoring goals."

Ilkeston Town's Matt Carmichael faces his former club, Scunthorpe United. Carmichael, who scored both of Ilkeston's goals in their first-round victory over Boston United, was sold to Scunthorpe by Lincoln City's then manager, Keith Alexander, who is now in charge of Ilkeston.

The most familiar foe of the afternoon will be the managers for Dagenham & Redbridge's visit to Peterborough. Barry Fry, Peterborough's manager, served a long apprenticeship in the non-League game, while his

opposite number, Ted Hardy, is the oldest manager still in the Cup at 68.

Two Ryman League teams who did well to knock out League opposition in the last round will attempt to do so again. Basingstoke Town, who disposed of Wycombe Wanderers, travel to Northampton, while Hendon, who knocked out Leyton Orient last month, are away to Cardiff City, their conquerors a year ago.

Basingstoke's manager, Ernie Howe, the former Fulham centre-half, has had Northampton watched and received a 13-page report on the Second Division side. However, he will not be showing it to his team. "If I read all that to my players they would be frightened to death, and some of them wouldn't even turn up," he said.

## SIDELINES

Winning their  
spurs at Chelsea

Jimmy Greaves made lightning look lazy when he scored on his Chelsea debut at Tottenham 40 years ago. Long before he metamorphosed into the rotund TV pundit known as Greavsie, this most perfect of predators was one of a large number of players with a niche in the history of both today's opponents.

Arriving at Spurs via Milan in 1961, Greaves linked with two forwards signed from Chelsea, Bobby Smith and Les Allen. Double-winners both, Terry Venables made the same switch in '66, and as manager would buy Gordon Durie from the Blues.

The earliest transfers between the Lane and the Bridge had been in the opposite direction. Two of Spurs' FA Cup-winning side in 1901, John Kirwan and David Copeland, appeared in Chelsea's inaugural fixture four years later. Vivian Woodward, who scored Spurs' first League goal when he was also a club director and an architect, resurfaced at Chelsea after retiring.

Others with a dual connection include Danny Blanchflower, Allan Harris, Tommy Hamer, Keith Weller, Micky Hazard, Graham Roberts, Colin Lee, Clive Allen (son of Les, who was swapped for Johnny Brooks), Peter Shreeves, Jason Cundy and Clive Wilson, back in Spurs' defence under Herr Gross. Talking of managerial Christians, Glenn Hoddle made quite a mark on both camps, though from Greavsie to Glenda, Spurs have had the better of the deals.



Ten things  
that  
Everton's  
Croat  
Slaven  
Bilic  
might be  
missing  
today



- 1 Sunshine. Croatia's 2,600 hours of it every year are amongst the longest in Europe. (While the blue side of Liverpool lives in darkness at the moment.)
- 2 The Kajkavian song festival in Krapina. Like Everton away wins, it happens annually.
- 3 The Una, Kupa, Sava, Drava and Danube delta.
- 4 Salty pickhards.
- 5 Licko Senjska. A region of natural beauty as opposed to a strange fetish club.
- 6 Huntsmen's cries of "Deer, doe, boar and

bear." Makes a change from "Oh dear, doh! I'm bored, I can't bear this." 7 101 things Dalmatian. 8 The shrine of Marija Bistrica, where the Virgin Mary has been seen and miracles have been experienced after prayer. Howard Kendall has obviously never been there. 9 Plum and herb brandy. 10 The rejuvenating spas at Umag, Opatija and Crikvenica. As hot as a post-match Goodison bath, but the contents aren't as likely to go down the plug-hole.

NAME OF THE GAME  
No 12: HARTLEPOOL UNITED

Poor old Hartlepool are arguably the Football League's most consistently unsuccessful club, having been in its bottom division for all but three seasons since joining the Third Division North in 1921. They had to seek re-election to the League an unequalled 14 times and have the worst FA Cup record, never having reached the last 16. Changing their name has been about the most exciting event in the club's history: founded as Hartlepool United in 1908, the club changed its name to Hartlepool in 1968 and to Hartlepool United in 1977. Which prompts just one question: why?

THIS  
WEEK

On 9 December 1989, the draw for the 1990 World Cup in Italy saw England grouped for their first-round games with the Republic of Ireland, the Netherlands and Egypt.

The reaction of Bobby Robson, the England manager, was echoed almost verbatim on Thursday by Glenn Hoddle. "It could have been better, could have been worse," they said, eight years apart.

In the 1990 finals, draws against their European opponents and a win over Egypt saw England progress to beat Belgium and Cameroon before going out to West Germany in the semi-final. Scotland, drawn with Brazil, Costa Rica and Sweden, fell at the first hurdle.

HISTORY  
LESSON

As Aston Villa attempt to overcome a 2-1 deficit in the second leg of their Uefa Cup third-round tie against Steaua Bucharest next week they can find some encouragement from their own record in European competition.

Although Villa have only ever lost the first leg in Europe but gone on to win on one occasion, they did so in impressive style. In the first round of the 1983-84 Uefa Cup, Villa lost 1-0 away to Vitoria Guimaraes, but a Peter Witte hat-trick helped them to a thumping 5-0 win in the second leg. Villa lost 4-3 on aggregate to Moscow Spartak in the next round.

Villa have played in the Uefa Cup four times in the 1990s, but this is the first time they have progressed beyond the second round.

## THIS WEEK'S TRANSFERS

**Transfers**  
Free transfers or nominal fees  
unless stated  
Chris Coleman (defender) Blackburn to Fulham (£21m)  
Nikola Anagnostov (midfielder) IFK Gothenburg (Rwe) to Sheffield Wednesday (£750,000)  
Dean Saunders (forward) Nottingham Forest to Sheffield Utd (£400,000)  
David Hensie (midfielder) Northampton to Peterborough  
Darrin Beardsley (forward) TNS Uster (Swi) to Bury

**Loans/trials**  
Shawn Charlton (defender) Southampton to Birmingham  
Martin Power (midfielder) Leeds to Blackpool  
Andy Gray (midfielder) Leeds to Bury  
Adrian Reid (defender) Blackburn to Rochdale  
Lawrence Davies (forward) Bradford City to Darlington  
Craig Midgley (forward) Bradford City to Darlington  
Brent Ings (striker) Bodo/Glra (Nor) to Leeds (trial)

Contributors: Phil Shaw, Nick Harris, Paul Newman  
Readers' contributions welcome. Send to Sidelines, Sports Desk, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 6DL

## Blatter combines a safe pair of hands with inspiration

Billions watched him on television but the only thing most knew about the man conducting the World Cup draw was that he wants to ban tackling. He does not, but FIFA's general secretary does have a purge planned for the summer. Glenn Moore, in Marseilles, listened to the thoughts of one of the most influential men in world football.

There were some jeers when he stepped on stage but mostly puzzlement among the 38,000 spectators at the Stade Velodrome and the billions watching around the globe. Who was this little, balding man? Why was he running the World Cup draw instead of Franz Beckenbauer, Michel Platini or one of the other luminaries involved in Marseilles on Thursday night.

The man was Sepp Blatter, the 62-year-old general secretary of FIFA, the game's world governing body. At that moment he looked just like the "Swiss watchmaker" his friend and boss, Joao Havelange, had affectionately called him the previous day.

An hour later Blatter had the audience and viewers eating out of his hand. The draw had been conducted immaculately with just the right amount of restrained showmanship. A smile here, a gesture there, a telling pause every now and again as he held a nation's footballing fate in his hand before revealing it to the cameras.

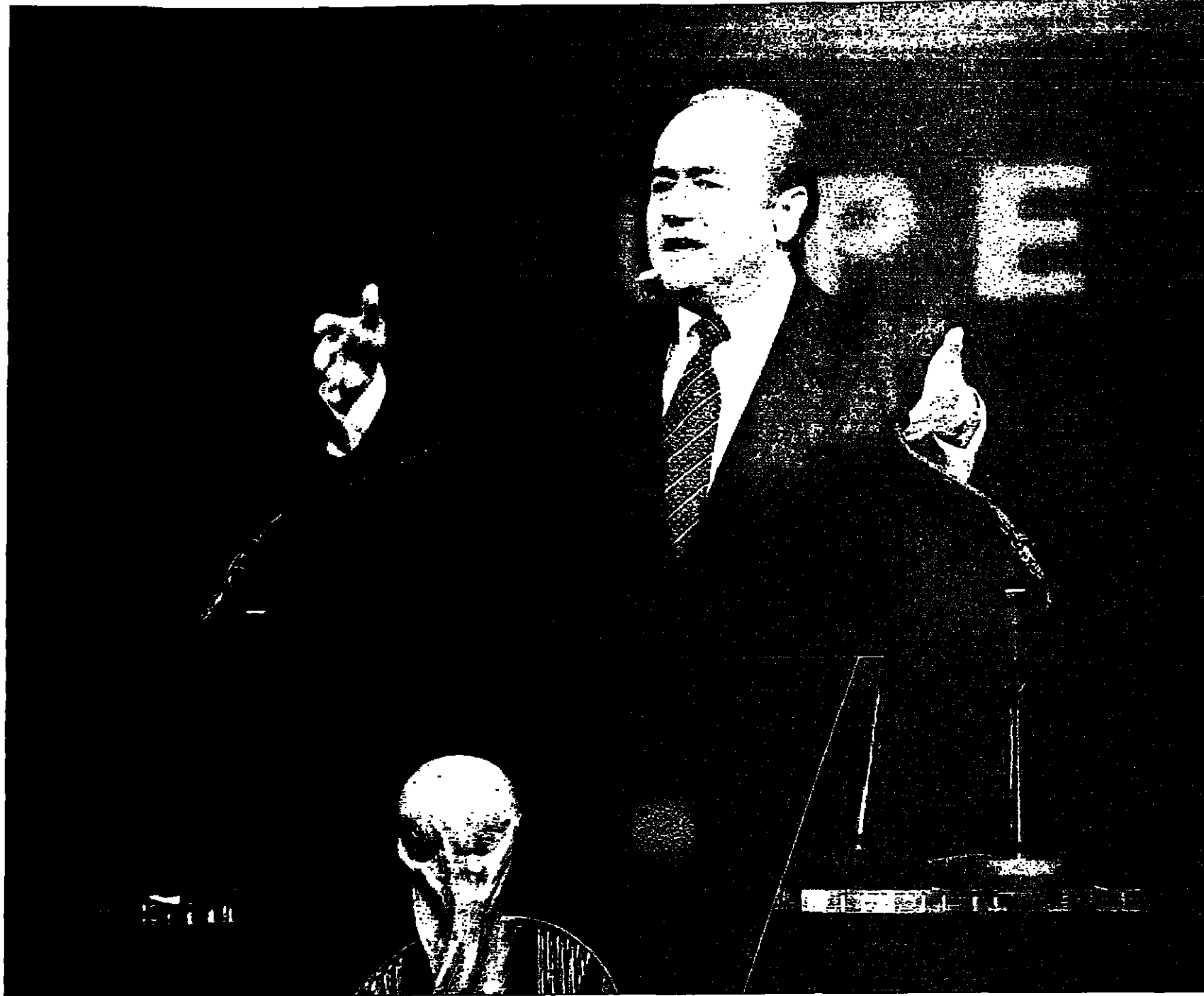
Thursday night was Blatter's 25th draw - "my silver jubilee", he said - but he was not doing it, as so often happens, out of egoism. As one veteran of these affairs said: "He does it because it is so complicated he can't trust anyone else not to cock it up."

The draws, however, are a small part of his work. In his day job Blatter, who is effectively chief executive, provides much of the perspiration that keeps the game functioning and some of the inspiration behind its continued development.

It is fashionable to knock FIFA, as it is all sports bureaucracies. But compare football's relatively smooth progress towards world domination to the mess that cricket, both rugby codes, athletics and many other sports continually find themselves in.

The game is now truly global - "we have 198 members", he notes - and, while Havelange has been the driving force behind football's development outside the traditional Europe-South America axis, Blatter has often been the executor. This aspect was his first job at FIFA after Havelange, soon after his own election as president, had spotted him working for Swiss Timing - though not as a watchmaker - at the Munich Olympics.

In England it is FIFA's tinkering with the laws, or rather, as Blatter says, "their interpretation", which has been noticed. After initial reservations they have generally been for the good but recently it seemed



Fifa's general secretary, Sepp Blatter, delivers a speech of welcome at the Stade Velodrome in Marseilles during Thursday's World Cup draw. Photograph: AFP

he was going too far. "Blatter wants to outlaw tackling" went the headlines. Does he?

"Football is incredibly popular and sometimes it is a victim of its popularity," he said after we met in Marseilles. "The important thing is we get people to talk about football but sometimes they get the wrong interpretation. This was literally a mistranslation due to there being two words for tackle in German. The point I was trying to make was that we have banned the tackle from behind but people are still making dangerous tackles and we must tighten the regulations on that."

The inspiration for this, incidentally, comes not from Blatter but from Platini.

"In Italy in 1991 Michel said in the task force [a body set up by Blatter to consider ways of improving the game] we should ban tackling. Everyone thought 'you can't do that'. He was pretty radical at the time but as the game has got faster we have seen more tackles from behind and that is what Michel was really on about. It is not just to prevent ball players like Platini himself - or Marco van Basten whose career was ended by such tackles - but also the ordinary Saturday afternoon player who gets

crunched by people coming in from behind, or from the side, with feet in the air."

This initiative was successfully brought in before the 1994 World Cup. So what will referees, at their March get-together, be told to crack down on next summer?

"There will be a lot of emphasis on the distance of the wall at a free-kick. There is no point talking about giving referees laser zappers shining on the ground and the referee saying 'get back to there' because players won't take any notice. Then what does the referee zap them off at the knee? The law is there, they should be 9.15 metres

from the ball and if they don't get back it is in the referees' power to give the nearest guy a yellow card - all they have to do is implement it. The World Cup is the shop window, if you can get the referees to apply the laws of the game strictly in it, referees and players at lower levels will accept that is the way to do it."

This will, inevitably, lead to a rash of yellow cards and dismissals of players collecting too many yellows. Two possible disciplinary adjustments, rugby league's sin-bin and hockey's use of three cards to similar effect, have both been rejected partly on administrative grounds. "We have enough people coming and going as it is, with three substitutes in each side."

"The referee should not have a soft option," Blatter adds. "He should be strong enough to say 'that's a yellow or that's a red'. There is a large body of thought that thinks the main problem is the yellow card - a lot of referees go for yellow when they know, in their heart of hearts, they should be showing a red."

The use of video to assist referees, which is supported by Platini, is rejected until it is perfect - and then only for assessing whether the ball has gone over the line. The principle of professional referees - though not to the extent it is their sole livelihood - receives favour, the idea of two referees does not.

On to another bugbear, the ever-expanding fixture list. "The quickest and easiest way to reduce the pressure on players remains reducing the top division by two clubs - that immediately cuts out four matches a season. Obviously the clubs are not too keen as it will have a commercial impact but we should not kid ourselves. Most clubs, when they get an opportunity for a few free days, go off and play a friendly somewhere."

Clubs, especially in Europe, are growing in wealth and, subsequently, power. The prospect of FIFA struggling to retain both control and the primacy of international football is a real one.

"We need to maintain an equilibrium. You only have to look at Euro 96 or a World Cup, the whole country is united behind one team. National teams are and always will be essential to the football landscape."

"Football has become very attractive to people who have never been involved in it. Bureaucrats and businessmen think they can get a higher profile for themselves by getting involved, and one of the big problems in football is not the game itself but the people on its periphery."

"They are there because their wallet is in football and, in many cases, they are smarter than those who are there because their heart is in football."

Blatter, while influential, is technically just one of FIFA's 60 salaried employees (average age 35). While he influences and executes policy, Havelange, as president, shapes it. The 81-year-old Brazilian retires next summer and, this week, anointed Blatter his preferred successor with the words: "If my friend wins [the election] I would shake his hand. If he lost I would weep."

Very touching, but Blatter has yet to indicate he even wants the post - Lennart Johansson, the president of European football's governing body, Uefa, is the only declared candidate. Will Blatter stand? He gives a classic politician's answer which reveals nothing but, so long as he feels he can work with Johansson, Blatter will probably be happy enough to keep juggling the balls he already has in his grasp. Football can be grateful he appears to possess a safe pair of hands.

## When the black market offers a way around the red tape

Every football fan should go to a World Cup tournament; being part of the beautiful game's greatest gathering is an unforgettable experience. With next year's finals if not quite coming home then at least visiting the neighbours, many supporters will be tempted to make this the one.

For UK-based fans, travelling to France is easy - a plethora of trains, boats, cars and planes means that all 10 venues should be easily and affordably accessed. Accommodation, from hotels to camp sites, is plentiful and generally of a high standard. Which just leaves getting hold of tickets.

And it's a minefield. The ticket distribution systems employed by World Cup and European Championship organisers have long been underpinned by the same basic principles. The aim is to sell large blocks of tickets as early as possible to organisations (and even individuals) who then face the task of redistributing or perhaps reselling them to people who actually intend going to the games. 200,000 of the 2.5 million tickets available for France are being sold to tour operators, with a further 300,000 set aside for sponsors and commercial affiliates.

French citizens bought all 1.27 million France Passes - cards covering every group and round of 16 match at a specified venue. Effectively, this is a season ticket, but its inflexibility means that to attend games with friends or relatives, or to travel to different venues, supporters had to purchase a series of cards. Widespread trading and swapping of these therefore seems inevitable.

### STEVE BEAUCHAMPE ON THE TRAUMAS OF OBTAINING A TICKET FOR FRANCE 98

At least French citizens could choose which fixtures and teams to watch. Fans resident in the remaining 190 FIFA-member countries effectively had no such choice. Allocations to the 32 qualifiers for their own matches (France excepted) are under 10 per cent of ground capacity. And with five of the venues holding fewer than 40,000 spectators, most countries will find demand outstripping supply. Allocations for other games are minuscule, and for some fixtures they can be counted in tens.

The system is crazy. If you a) wish to follow any country other than the one in which you reside; b) live in a country that failed to qualify; or c) find that your own country's allocation is over subscribed, then obtaining tickets officially means approaching tour operators. Using their dominant market position, they can charge excessively for their packages (I was quoted £1,600 for a trip to the semi-final and final by one English company). The only alternative for most supporters is the black market, which, though risky and unpredictable, might bring results.

A consequence of these FIFA-approved ticket sales mechanisms is that (for all but the biggest fixtures) there are

often thousands of tickets searching for buyers, sometimes right up until match day. Unable to purchase affordably priced tickets in England, I flew to the 1994 World Cup ticketless, targeted five games (two of which organisers insisted were sold out) and got into every one, just once paying above face value, and then only by \$5 (£3). One was marked Israeli FA; a friend's read property of the Panamanian FA. At Italia 90, one sponsor had so many excess tickets for the England v Cameroon match that they gave fistfuls away outside the stadium before kick-off.

So, while frustrated fans agonise over whether to travel to France, and those with blocks of tickets desperately try to find buyers for them, World Cup organisers can relax, safe in the knowledge that ticket distribution is no longer their problem. Instead, they are able to tell both FIFA and the world's media that high ticket sales have helped ensure the tournament's profitability.

A fundamental rethink is needed, aimed at getting tickets directly from tournament organisers to those fans who actually wish to attend games. The feasibility of a system which allows tickets to be sold via credit cards and the Internet should be investigated and steps taken to prevent tour operators and national FAs from exploiting and abusing their access to tickets. For France 98, a shambles is guaranteed, but there is still time to improve things for Euro 2000 and beyond.

Steve Beauchampe is a former international officer of the Football Supporters' Association.

## United States hoping to build bridges

Alan Rothenberg, the United States Soccer Federation president, hopes that his national side's World Cup first-round game against Iran may be used to build bridges. "Maybe we can have soccer diplomacy like we had ping-pong diplomacy with China," he said yesterday.

The States and Iran have been enemies since the Islamic revolution toppled the American-backed Shah in 1979 and 52 hostages were held at the US Embassy in Tehran for 444 days. Eighteen years later, the nations have not resumed diplomatic relations.

"I don't think President Clinton is going to that game," the US captain, John Harkes, said yesterday.

Both teams will attempt to avoid the political distractions. "The meaning of FIFA [the game's world governing body] is peace and unity," the Iranian football federation president, Darius Mostafavi, said. "We are thinking only of soccer, not politics. We are friends of the people of the USA. However, I think we have a chance of beating the United States because they are definitely not better than us."

"I don't think it's the group of death," the US coach, Steve Sampson, said. "I think there are one or two more groups that are stronger than ours."

The Romanian captain, Gheorghe Hagi, will retire from international football after next year's World Cup finals.

"Hagi has played for 18 years at the greatest level of soccer and this will be enough for him," his agent, Giovanni Becali, said yesterday.

Hagi, 32, led his team-mates to the World Cup quarter-finals in 1994. During the qualifying rounds, he reached a record 32 goals for Romania. His next game will be his 108th for his country.

## Small town may face rude awakening

Despite the poor reputation of English supporters, John Lichfield reports from Paris that World Cup group match next year are looking forward to their presence.

Lens, the venue of one of England's three first-stage matches, is the smallest town ever to stage a World Cup game.

The industrial town only 40 miles from the English Channel, says it is "delighted" to have drawn one of England's fixtures. Whether the pleasure will survive the night of 26 June, when England play Colombia in the last match in Group G is open to question.

The Felix-Bollaert stadium holds 41,275 people (6,000 more than the town) and under the ticketing rules, England should be allocated just over 4,000 seats, with a few hundred more

available through accredited travel firms. Any tickets returned by Colombia will be sold to people with French addresses and French bank accounts.

With Lens being so accessible from Calais by autoroute, this may be a recipe for trouble, with hundreds of ticketless fans crossing the Channel. But officials in the town say they are pleased and honoured to have drawn their near-neighbours; they also hope the Jamaica-Croatia game on 14 June will in attract London-based West Indians.

"I have spoken to dozens of officials and politicians in the town, and no one is worried in the least bit," said Philippe Leclercq, head of the Lens office of the regional newspaper *La Voix du Nord*. "On the contrary, they think it is a great honour."

"They say they have been assured that supporters of the English national team are not like supporters of the big English clubs. They are much more calm and responsible."

If this is the level of research conducted by the town, Lens may be in for a rude awakening indeed. A spokesman at the Town Hall said senior officials would consider what extra precautions might be needed. At present, they were "delighted" with the outcome of the draw, which also gives them Germany versus Yugoslavia and Spain against Bulgaria.

The draw emphasises the inflexibility of the system for allocating matches next year: on the same night, in the same Group, Romania and Tunisia, will be playing the new 80,000-capacity Stade de France near Paris. The organisers could switch the games but, with a large Tunisian community in Paris, this is said to be extremely unlikely.

English supporters with tickets for the Colombia game should probably consider staying elsewhere (in Lille or on the Channel coast). Lens has only one hotel on the list recommended by the World Cup organising committee. By contrast,

the venues for England's first phase matches, Toulouse and Marseilles, are among the largest cities in France.

The large North African community in Marseilles makes England's opening match on 15 June almost a home game for Tunisia. Officials in the cities also said yesterday that they had no reason to anticipate trouble with English fans after the generally good experience during the *Tournoi de France* last summer.

Despite Scottish fears that their fans may be squeezed out of the World Cup's opening fixture, against Brazil, organisers were clear yesterday that the usual rules on ticket allocation will apply. Of the 80,000 tickets for the game at St Denis, the French allocation has already been sold or at least accounted for. Of the other 28 per cent, eight per cent will go to tour operators, while the other 20 per cent will be divided between the Brazilian and Scottish authorities - giving Scottish fans a minimum of 8,000 tickets.

## Hoddle seeks way to avoid tension

With the World Cup draw finally made, England and Scotland are finalising their preparations and as Glenn Moore discovers, Glenn Hoddle's men may be at home when the Scots open the tournament.

England, like most of their supporters, could begin their World Cup watching Scotland take on Brazil from the comfort of their own living room - albeit without the case of beer. That is one scenario being considered by Glenn Hoddle as he seeks a way to avoid England's

late start to next summer's tournament counting against them. Under World Cup regulations England do not need to arrive in France until the evening of 10 June, five days before their opening fixture with Tunisia in Marseilles and a few hours after the Scots open the competition in Paris.

"I'm happy with the draw but not the late start," said Hoddle in Marseilles yesterday. "I would prefer to get under way earlier. There will be matches being played, the team will watch them on television but not be able to play themselves. That could lead to a build-up in tension. We could watch the opening ceremony then fly out."

England's pre-tournament preparations are likely to begin

with a week abroad, in Portugal, Spain or France, perhaps with a game, before the players are given time off to be with their families. They would then meet up at Bisham Abbey, their domestic base, before flying out to their World Cup retreat at La Baule, near Nantes.

From this attractive Brittany resort they will travel to each match by air the day before the game and return to the Atlantic coast afterwards. Hoddle, who had already scouted Marseilles and Lens, flew back for today's Liverpool v Manchester United game leaving FA staff to look for overnight accommodation in Toulouse. Scotland are undecided about their likely base, Craig Brown and his staff were assessing options, mainly

around Lyon and St Etienne, yesterday.

Both teams will also be stepping up their scouting operation, especially in reference to Tunisia and Morocco, the north African teams drawn by England and Scotland respectively.

Should England qualify second from their group they could face Argentina, Germany and Brazil in seven days. Or they might face unexpected opposition in the second round though it is hard to imagine either Japan or Jamaica qualifying at the expense of Argentina or Croatia.

"Whoever we play will not be easy," said Hoddle. "If it is a surprise team they will be there for a reason - because they are a good side."



# 25/FOOTBALL

THE INDEPENDENT  
SATURDAY 6 DECEMBER

## France the target for goal-hunters Fowler and Cole

**Unpredictable Liverpool could surprise us all by getting the better of Manchester United today in a game that also gives rival England strikers the chance to show their World Cup worth.**

**Phil Shaw looks at the weekend ahead while Nick Harris (below) analyses the programme match by match.**

As the spotlight swings from Marseilles to Merseyside, from a spectacle that engaged an entire planet to the parochial business of Premiership success and survival, both Liverpool and Everton have the world to play for.

In their last home fixture, Liverpool lost humiliatingly to the bottom club, Barnsley. In the next, this morning, they confront Manchester United. It speaks volumes for their baffling inconsistency and exceptional capabilities that no one will be unduly surprised if they defeat the champions.

Roy Evans' prospects of continuing as Liverpool manager did not look auspicious after the Barnsley débâcle. Before United there was the small matter of a trip to Arsenal. Highbury presented

their problems and potential in microcosm: Steve McManaman, languid for most of the match, suddenly stirred himself to win the match with a virtuoso goal.

United realise better than most the folly of characterising any game as crucial or decisive before the season has even reached the half-way stage. Alex Ferguson was no more triumphalist after Sunday's rout of Blackburn than he was panicked by defeat at Arsenal last month.

That said, the match could make or break Liverpool's chances of featuring in the title race. They are currently nine points off the pace with a game in hand. A 12-point deficit would present psychological as well as practical difficulties, especially now that

United are all but free to concentrate on defending the title.

Suspension and injury have spared squeamish spectators the sight of Paul Ince and Roy Keane going head to head, but the match will provide a fascinating comparison between two strikers who may be competing for one place in England's World Cup squad for France.

Robbie Fowler returns for Liverpool, almost certainly to link up with Michael Owen in a bid to expose Gary Pallister's susceptibility to pace. Andy Cole will be striving to show that his glut of goals for United against Barnsley and Sheffield Wednesday can be maintained against Evans' rather quicker defenders. With a 7th 6in bronze cast of Bill Shankly newly unveiled at

Anfield, it could be a bad day for centre-backs to look statuesque.

How Everton would love to be in a position where being cast adrift referred to the leadership rather than last place. After another week in which their chairman, Peter Johnson, failed to clarify the position regarding what funds, if any, are available to Howard Kendall, they travel to Leeds seeking to end two desperate sequences.

It is a year next week since Everton beat Derby at the Baseball Ground with a last-minute goal, their last away win in 20 games. Worse still, their record at Eland Road shows not a single success in 32 League visits stretching back to 1951.

A sixth successive Pre-

mier league defeat would leave Everton needing to win half their remaining matches to stay up. Leeds, in contrast, have won four in a row for the first time since April 1995 when, coincidentally, Howard Wilkinson was named Carling Manager of the Month as George Graham was yesterday.

Man for man, Everton's line-up does not look conspicuously inferior to Leeds'; the difference is that Graham has instilled a spirit which has helped the Yorkshire side come from behind in the last three victories. Whatever happens today, Johnson is assured of a rough ride at Goodison's annual meeting on Monday.

Chelsea's pursuit of Manchester United collides head-on with Tottenham's need to

put clear water between themselves and the relegation zone. Precedent does not augur well for Christian Gross in his first home game in charge of Spurs. Chelsea have won five and lost none in eight meetings at White Hart Lane dating back a decade.

Arsenal's championship hopes are in danger of becoming history unless they snap out of a six-match run without a win. The trek to Newcastle, who may have Faustino Asprilla back as they try to cling on the leaders' coat-tails themselves, will have given them time to reflect on the resilience which won the day at St James' Park a year ago. Arsène Wenger's team played all but 22 minutes without the sent-off Tony Adams, yet still prevailed with an Ian Wright goal.

John Harrison's score spree, coinciding with six run outings for Wright, prompted once-unthinkable doubts about Wenger's dominance in selling the Welshman West Ham. However, three of Harrison's 17 goals have come away from Upton Park mirroring his side's return just one point out of 21 on road. Derby's unbeaten start at Pride Park suggests they struggle to break the spell.

But if Everton, Spurs West Ham feel they are labelling against the odds, spate thought for Coventry. Already in their customary lowly position, and lacking the injury Gary McAllister, they make short hop to Aston Villa knowing they have never won there despite 23 attempts since over 60 years.

### Aston Villa v Coventry

Yorke 6  
Leading scorer  
Last season: 2-1  
Dublin 8

Aston Villa's versatile Simon Grayson may start his first game for a month as central defenders Gareth Southgate, Riccardo Scimeca and David Hughes are all doubtful through injury. Midfielder Ian Taylor will once again be missing as he sits out the final game of a three-match ban. Goalkeeper Mark Bosnich, back from international duty with Australia, is set to return to the side in place of former England Under-21 keeper Michael Oakes. Villa have won only one of their past six Premiership games.

Coventry captain Gary McAllister misses the derby with a knee injury sustained last week. Coventry, who have never won at Villa Park, recall David Burrows after a one-game absence. He was left out of the side that lost 2-0 at home to Leicester last week because he was involved in proposed transfer swap with Sheffield Wednesday's Mark Pemberton, which has now fallen through. Irish midfielder Willie Boland is suspended. Norwegian Trond Solvestad and Dane Martin Johansen are in contention to take over in midfield.

### Blackburn v Bolton

Sutton 11  
Leading scorer  
Last season: No fixture  
Blake 8

Blackburn's leading scorer Chris Sutton (knee) has had treatment and should be fit, while captain Tim Sherwood and defender Jeff Kenna have both passed tests on minor injuries. Norwegian defender Tore Pedersen has a minor injury but will be left out anyway, as Col in Hendry returns. Hendry has been out for a month with a cold injury and will replace Pedersen, partnering Stephane Henchoz in defence. Kevin Gallacher is now fully fit and available after being on the substitutes' bench at Old Trafford last week.

Bolton defender Gerry Taggart, having completed a six-match ban, is available for selection. Central defender Chris Fairclough and full-back Neil Cox are also available after recovering from injury, but all three may struggle to win immediate recalls. Colin Todd is likely to begin with a back four of captain Gudni Bergsson, Mark Fish, Andy Todd, and Mike Whitlow, with Taggart on the bench. Todd's side will be buoyed by their 1-0 win over Newcastle last Monday, and will start Nathan Blake and Dean Holdsworth up front.

### Derby v West Ham

Wanchope 10  
Leading scorer  
Last season: 1-0  
Harrison 17

Igor Stimac ends a two-month absence when he returns to first-team football today. The Derby captain has finally recovered from the back injury that has kept him out since October and will replace Dean Yates. Although Stimac is back, Danish defender Jacob Laursen is still out with a knee injury and midfielder Robbie van der Laan misses his eighth game with a damaged ankle. Derby, unbeaten at home in Premiership, will be looking to recover from their 4-0 defeat at Chelsea last week.

Stan Lazaridis and Andy Ince are doubts for West Ham today but Paul Ince should make a return after 10 weeks out with a groin injury. Goalkeeper Lukasz Miklosko missed the 4-1 win over Crystal Palace on Wednesday with a neck injury, and might not feature. Midfielder Frank Lampard has recovered from the virus which has kept him out for two games. The Hammers will be looking to replicate their home form - nine wins from the last 10 games - away, where they have won just once and lost seven times this season.

### Leeds v Everton

Wallace 10  
Leading scorer  
Last season: 1-0  
Cadamarcq, Speed 5

Two of Leeds' international contingent, Lucas Radebe and Harry Kewell, are doubtful for today. South African defender Radebe, who will fly out immediately after the game for tomorrow's friendly with Brazil in Johannesburg, might play despite a groin strain, but Australian striker Kewell has a knee problem which has only allowed him to undergo light training this week. Captain David Hopkin is definitely out as he completes a three-game suspension. Leeds' manager, George Graham, has steered his side to four consecutive Premiership wins.

Everton are likely to recall Andy Hinchcliffe as they attempt to end a sequence of 20 successive away games without a win stretching back to a 1-0 victory win at Derby in December last year. New Norwegian also returns to the squad after recovering from a midweek training injury and will also be in the squad, although Neville Southall is expected to play after recovering from bruised ribs.

### Leicester v Crystal Palace

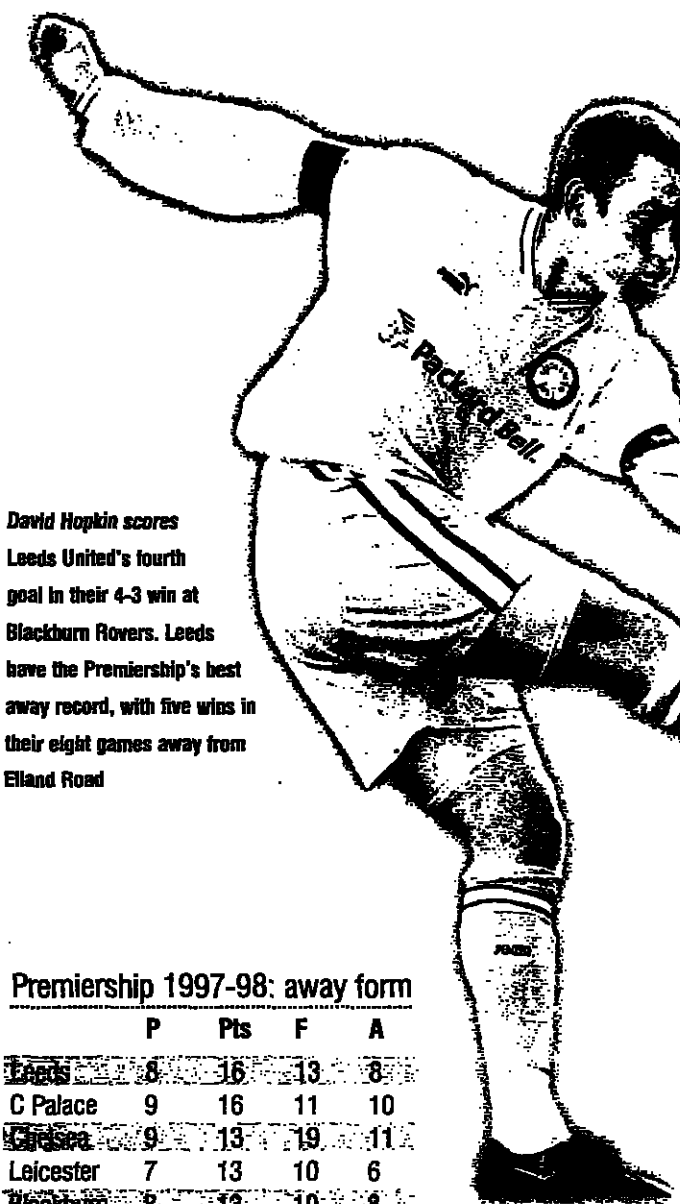
Marshall 7  
Leading scorer  
Last season: No fixture  
Shipperley 5

Martin O'Neill's side are back in the Premiership top six after their 2-0 victory at Coventry last weekend. However, O'Neill could be 2-0 victory at Coventry last weekend. However, O'Neill could be without eight players today. Ian Marshall, Steve Walsh and Steve Guppy face late fitness tests after joining long-term absentee Scott Taylor on the injury list, while Garry Parker remains absent because his loan at Birmingham and Mark Robins is looking for a new club in Greece. Rob Ullathorne could be added to the squad for the first time since breaking his ankle 10 months ago.

Crystal Palace are likely to be without Jamie Smith, who limped off after 12 minutes of the 4-1 midweek defeat at West Ham. Smith may yet recover, otherwise another player with an ankle problem, Andy Roberts, is fit enough to travel and could play, as could Bruce Dyer. Roberto is fit enough to travel and could play, as could Bruce Dyer. Roberto is fit enough to travel and could play, as could Bruce Dyer.

### ...And statistics

## Away form holds the key



Statistics: Brian Sears

It is one of football's truisms that championships are won away from home. The leading teams nearly always have good home form; champions must achieve similar success on their travels as well.

In their championship years Manchester United have usually performed consistently well away from Old Trafford. This season, however, there are five Premier teams who have picked up more away points than Alex Ferguson's side. United lead the table thanks to a near-perfect home record of seven wins and one draw from eight games.

Of the likely challengers to United, Leeds, Chelsea and Blackburn have the most productive away form. Leeds, in fourth place in the Premiership, have the best away record, having taken 16 points on their travels and only 13 from games at Eland Road.

One of Leeds' home defeats was against the team with the most surprising away form this season, Crystal Palace. Despite their midweek defeat at West Ham, Palace have earned 16 points from away games. Contrast this with their home record, which shows no wins, four defeats and just three draws.

Palace's record is in sharp contrast to that of their conquerors on Monday night.

West Ham have picked up only four points away from Upton Park, where they have won six of their seven Premier-ship matches.

At the bottom of the table Everton have earned just two points from their travels. Sheffield Wednesday and Barnsley have the worst defensive records, having both conceded 25 goals away from home.

Overall, the proportion of Premiership points won away from home this season is surprisingly high - 40 per cent.

Manchester United, predictably, boast the best away Premiership record in a single season (1993-94, when they won 13 of their 21 games away from Old Trafford), while Leeds have the worst record: in 1992-93 they failed to win a single game away from home, though they avoided relegation thanks to their good form at Eland Road, where they lost only once.

### Premiership 1997-98: away form

	P	Pts	F	A
Leeds	8	16	13	8
Crystal Palace	9	16	11	10
Chelsea	9	13	19	11
Leicester	7	13	10	6
Blackburn	8	13	10	8
Man United	8	12	13	8
Sheff Wed	7	11	9	7
Liverpool	8	10	8	8
Arsenal	8	10	12	14
Aston Villa	9	8	8	11
Newcastle	8	7	6	9
Derby	8	6	11	19
Bolton	8	6	7	18
Barnsley	8	6	6	25
Tottenham	8	5	8	14
Coventry	7	5	3	11
Sheff Wed	8	5	13	25
West Ham	9	4	8	20
Southampton	7	3	5	13
Everton	8	2	5	14

### Best Premiership away record before reduction to 20 clubs

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man United (93-94)	21	13	5	3	41	28	44

### Best Premiership away record since reduction to 20 clubs

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man United (96-97)	18	9	6	3	26	14	33

### Worst Premiership away record

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leeds (92-93)	21	0	0	21	14	71	0

## FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: HOW THEY STAND

	P	Pts	GD	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Form	Upcoming matches
1 Man United	16	34	+29	7	1	0	27	4	3	2	10	8	1	WWWW	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
2 Chelsea	16	31	+18	6	0	1	16	6	4	1	4	19	11	WWLWW	15 Dec Leeds (H); 16 Dec Sheff Wed (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
3 Blackburn	16	30	+10	5	2	1	17	9	3	4	4	10	8	DDWW	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
4 Leeds	16	29	+7	4	1	3	13	11	5	1	2	13	8	LWWW	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
5 Arsenal	16	27	+0	5	2	1	18	4	2	4	2	12	11	WDWL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
6 Leicester	16	26	+7	3	4	2	11	8	4	1	2	10	6	WDLDW	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
7 Liverpool	16	25	+12	5	0	2	18	6	2	4	2	8	8	WDWLW	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
8 Newcastle	14	24	0	5	2	1	12	9	2	1	3	6	9	DDWWL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
9 Derby	15	23	+1	5	2	0	17	5	2	0	6	11	19	DLWL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
10 West Ham	16	22	-2	6	0	1	16	6	1	1	7	8	20	DLWLW	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
11 Wimbledon	16	19	-3	2	2	5	10	14	3	2	2	8	7	WLWL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
12 C Palace	16	19	-5	0	3	4	5	11	5	1	3	11	10	WDWL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
13 Bolton	16	19	-9	3	4	1	5	3	1	3	4	7	18	DLWLW	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
14 Aston Villa	16	18	-7	3	1	3	8	12	2	2	5	8	11	DLWL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
15 Sheff Wed	16	18	-9	4	1	3	15	12	1	2	5	13	15	LWWW	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
16 Coventry	16	17	-8	2	6	1	10	10	1	2	4	3	11	WDWL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
17 Southampton	16	16	-6	4	1	4	15	13	1	0	6	5	13	WWWL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
18 Tottenham	16	16	-9	3	2	3	7	6	1	1	5	6	14	LLWL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
19 Barnsley	16	13	-29	2	1	5	8	18	2	0	6	6	25	LDLWL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)
20 Everton	16	12	-11	3	1	4	11	13	0	2	5	5	14	LLLL	15 Dec Arsenal (H); 16 Dec Liverpool (A); 17 Dec Wimbledon (H); 18 Dec Southampton (A)

### Liverpool v Man Utd

Fowler 8  
Leading scorer  
Last season: 1-3  
Cole 8

Liverpool, who helped Manchester United last Sunday by Arsenal at Highbury, face up to their biggest test of the season on inspirational captain and former Old Trafford midfielder Ince, who completes his three-match suspension. Ince's absence has been compensated for by the return of Robbie Fowler (ban), who is to replace Karlheinz Riedle and partner Michael Owen in Rob Jones is not yet fully recovered from an Achilles problem. Mark Wright (back) is still not ready for a recall. Out-of-favour Thomas, who has rejected a move to Coventry, is unlikely to feature. Manchester United's Gary Pallister (hip) and Nicky Butt (shin) needed treatment following last week's 4-0 win over Blackburn both were yesterday cleared by Alex Ferguson to play at today. Fergusson may well leave last Sunday's side unchanged. Paul Scholes is still suspended, and Roy Keane and Denis Irwin injured. United go into the game with a three-point cushion, but a large goal-difference lead at the top of the Premiership.

### Newcastle v Arsenal

Asprilla 6  
Leading scorer  
Last season: 1-2  
Bergkamp 12

Faustino Asprilla could eventually make his return for Newcastle tearing a stomach muscle during their Champions' League in Kiev two months ago. He is nearly fully recovered from the surgery. John Barnes was thought to have torn a hamstring last Saturday's 2-1 win at Crystal Palace but it was only a cramp he is likely to start along with goalkeeper Shay Given, who has a cold and ankle injuries have cleared up.

Nicolas Anelka (ankle) is available again for Arsenal after he could threaten the place of the out-of-form Ian Wright. Vieira (knee) is still out, although he could return next week. Parlour (knee) has an outside chance of passing a late fitness test. Steve Bould completes a three-match ban for five yellow cards. Frenchman Gilles Grimandi starts one. Arsène Wenger has decided whether to change his formation, bringing in a third centre alongside Adams and Martin Keown, or stick to his favourite with Alberto Mendez challenging Stephen Hughes for a midfield

### Tottenham v Chelsea

Ginola 5  
Leading scorer  
Last season: 1-2  
Vialli 10

Christian Gross has a number of injury problems. Sol Campbell's shoulder strain makes him doubtful, although there is a chance he will be fit. If Campbell fails to make the team, Gross will be captain's armband to Colin Calderwood. Calderwood did not use in the first team towards the end of Gerry Francis' reign. He was employed by Gross in a midfield holding role in last 2-0 win at Everton. Chris Armstrong is still a long-term absentee while Steffen Iversen (foot) and Rory Allen (ankle) are both Jose Dominguez has recovered from injury and is back in the squad. Gullit, yet to field an unchanged Chelsea side in back-matches this season, has no fresh injury worries after last 4-0 win over Derby but is still without Eddie Newton (broken nose) and Gustavo Poyet (ruptured knee ligament). Italian striker ca Vialli, still Chelsea's top scorer with 10 goals in nine games left out against Derby but is in a squad of 19 today, along with young midfielder Mark Nicholls and Gullit himself.

### Wimbledon v Southampton

Curt 6  
Leading scorer  
Last season: 3-1  
Davies 10

Joe Kinnear is without five of his first-team squad for tomorrow. Wimbledon's injury crisis worsens. Jason Euell and John Gough are long-term injuries and Brian McAllister and Alan Hinton not responded to treatment. Efan Ekoku will have a late fit on an injured ankle. Kinnear now hopes that with the Wigan finalised, his international players, especially Jamaica's Robb will be able to concentrate on domestic matters.

Norwegian international Egil Ostenstad is in contention for Southampton's starting line-up for the first time in two Ostenstad has not started a game since undergoing ankle surgery in October but the striker scored for the reserves in midweek appearing as a late substitute in the 3-2 home defeat against Wednesday last weekend. Kevin Davies, named as joint Carer of the Month for November this week, will take his place today, looking to add to his 10 goals this season as Saints look a run of three successive defeats.

### FAIR PLAY LEAGUE

Referee	Games	Red	Yellow	Pts	Avg
1 M Reed	16	32	37	8.17	
2 G Willard	16	34	49	6.13	
3 P Durkin	10	2	42	5.20	
4 S Dunn	16	25	30	5.00	
5 G Poll	10	3	34	4.90	
6 G Ashby	9	1	31	3.67	
7 G Barber	16	29	34	4.25	
8 D Eleray	9	1	33	3.67	
9 J Winter	10	2	32	4.20	
10 P Jones	8	2	23	3.38	
11 P Alcock	8	0	31	3.88	
12 M Bodenham	8	0	30	3.75	
13 U Rennie	10	0	33	3.30	
14 D Gallagher	9	2	22	3.56	
15 A Walker	9	2	22	3.56	
16 N Barry	9	1	27	3.00	
17 M Riley	8	1	23	3.50	
18 K Burge	8	0	23	2.88	
19 S Lodge	9	0	19	2.11	

Premiership matches only. Red cards: 5pts. Yellow: 1pt. Includes abandoned Derby-Wimbledon and West Ham-Crystal Palace matches.

### UNFAIR PLAY LEAGUE

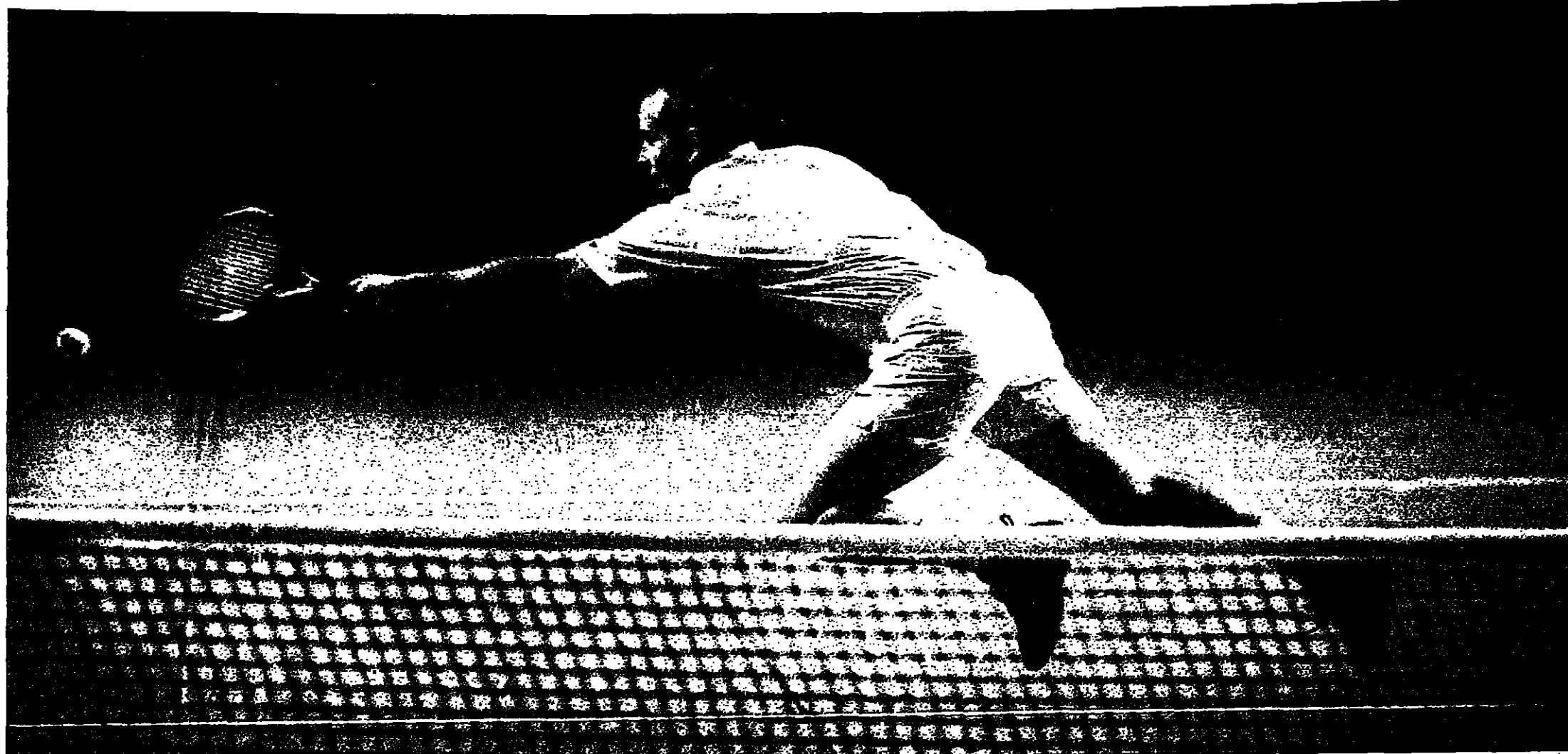
Referee	Games	Red	Yellow	Pts	Avg
1 Everton	16	3	34	4	
2 Bolton	16	16	3	31	
3 Chelsea	16	3	30	4	
4 Arsenal	16	1	36	4	
5 Blackburn	16	3	25	4	
6 Leeds	16	1	34	3	
7 Covent					



# SPORT

Saturday 6 December 1997

## McEnroe revives memories as he puts one over on his old adversary



John McEnroe stretches for the ball during his victory over Bjorn Borg in the ATP Senior Tour of Champions at the Royal Albert Hall yesterday

Report, page 21; Photograph: Robert Hallam

### RUGBY UNION

## Coaches wrestle with different worlds in final Test

If Clive Woodward's England are climbing purposefully among the foothills of the international rugby mountain, John Hart's All Blacks are so enjoying the view from the summit of Everest that they are in no hurry to descend. Chris Hewett expects New Zealand to touch even greater heights this afternoon.

England in turmoil. New Zealand in Arcadia. Four attritional weeks on the road have knocked chunks out of both sides and neither will venture unscathed into today's second Test at Twickenham. The similarity ends there, however. While Clive Woodward has spent his week wrestling with selection riddles at stand-off, wing, prop and hooker, anyone might have been forgiven for thinking that

the only dilemma facing the All Blacks was whether Zinzan Brooke, their majestic No 8, should celebrate his 100th and last game for the silver fern by scoring to the left of the English posts or the right.

Events may conspire to make fools of us all, of course, although there is more likelihood of Zinzan flummoxing everyone by scoring between the posts than of England turning the world on its head by inflicting what would be only the second defeat on the All Blacks since John Hart took over some 30 matches ago.

Lawrence Dallaglio's men should want this one more than the tourists, if only to earn Woodward some sort of reward for the spirit of adventure he has brought to the national cause. Sadly, England are no better placed to sneak a psychological advantage than they are to steal a technical or tactical march on the finest side to visit these shores since Basil Kenyon's Springboks gave British backsides a fearful Grand Slam kicking in 1951.

It is not England's penalty-laden 15-9 victory over New Zealand in 1993 that randles with Hart. He was out in the North Island cold at the time. The gremlin lurking under the coach's skin is of far more recent vintage, stemming as it does from events at Old Trafford a fortnight ago. Hart was genuinely angered by Martin Johnson's assault on

Justin Marshall, thoroughly insulted by Richard Cockerill's one-man invasion of the haka and, if truth be told, wholly deflated by his side's failure to use two early tries as the launchpad for something truly memorable. "Maybe we let the occasion get to us," he said yesterday, "but we've played at Twickenham before so it won't be happening

again. Our tour is not over until the final whistle this afternoon and we want to end it properly."

Intriguingly, Hart wants his players to seize the day for its own sake. "International rugby is so special that it makes no sense to play for anything but the present," he said. "I don't see the 1999 World Cup as the be all and end all. We could lose in '99—we're talking about one-off matches, after all—but, if we did, would it destroy the things we achieved in '96 and '97 and might yet achieve in '98? Not in my book, it wouldn't."

"There are things for us to celebrate in this game that will never happen again—Zinzan's retirement, Olo Brown's 50th cap—and I want us to do right by those landmarks."

For Woodward, 1999 is what this exercise is all about. Defeat today will leave him without a victory from his first four Tests and, given the fact that the fifth will be against France in Paris, a man of weaker will might be tempted to revert to English type, play safe on the selection

front and attempt to kick his way out of trouble. Which is precisely what he will not do.

"If the World Cup was being played this month, we'd be in no position to win it," he said. "But I can see us winning it in two years' time. I have a vision of how we should be playing and I intend to stick to it, both against New Zealand and throughout the Five Nations in the new year. Yes, I'm disappointed we're going into this game without a win. No, I'm not going to ditch my opinions. This is no time to start fudging the issues that this series against the southern hemisphere sides have thrown up."

The issues today are concentrated in two distinct areas: the respective front and back three. The absence of Craig Dowd and Sean Fitzpatrick undeniably lends New Zealand's front row a more human appearance and a world-class opposing trio might do enough to force the Brooke brothers, Andrew Mehrtens and the rest on to the back foot. Unfortunately, England have looked anything but world-

class in that theatre of action.

Should the tourists achieve parity or better at the set-piece, watch out world. Given decent ball and a yard to run in, Christian Cullen, Jeff Wilson and Jonah Lomu will surely fire enough bullets to penetrate an English defence seriously short of physical clout, not to mention international know-how.

Woodward will not be too depressed if New Zealand win by 20 clear points—but Hart will be more than a little cheesed off if it is any closer.

Randall at hub, Scotland's fear, page 21

### ENGLAND v NEW ZEALAND

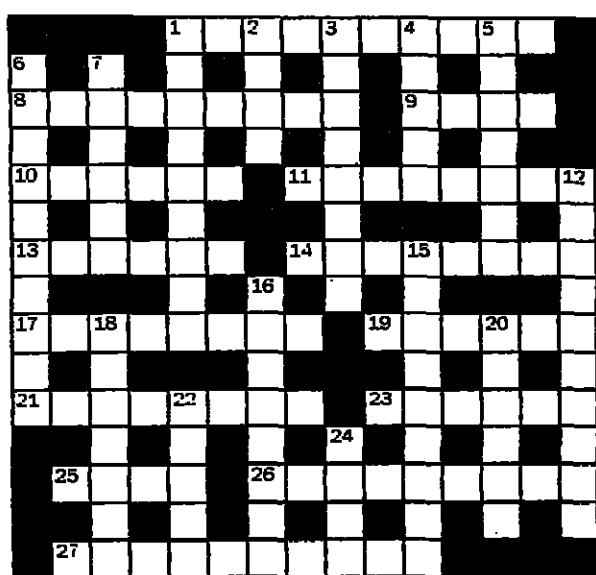
at Twickenham		
M Perry	15	C Cullen
D Rees	14	J Wilson
W Greenwood	13	F Brown
P de Glanville	12	W Little
A Healey	11	L Williams
P Grayson	10	A Matthews
K Bracken	9	J Marshall
J Leonard	8	M Allen
R Cockerill	7	N Hewitt
D Garforth	6	O Brown
M Johnson	5	J Jones
G Archer	4	B Brooke
L Dallaglio	3	T Randall
R Hill	2	Z Brooke
N Back	1	J Kronfeld

Replacements: 16 T Simpson (Newcastle); 17 M Dawson (Northampton); 18 C Sheehy (Widnes); 19 D Greenwood (Saracens); 20 K Yates (Bath); 21 M Regan (Bath). Kick-off: 2.0 (Sky Sports 2)

### THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

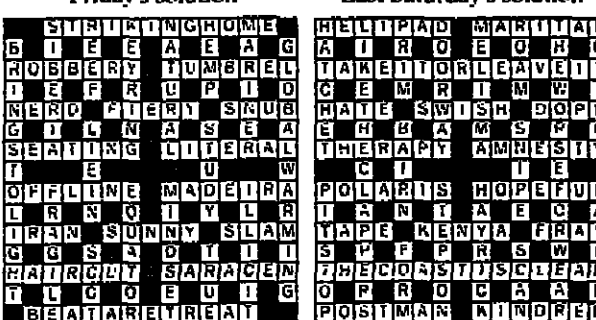
No. 3475, Saturday 6 December

By Spurius



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution



#### ACROSS

- Aussie town in which firm's controlled by Conservative politician's helper (10)
- Apple variety from Nepal? No, Rhode Island, surprisingly (9)
- In fact I regularly suffer reduction in interest (4)
- Girl catching boy's infection, possibly (6)
- Erect bearing (8)
- Having no success finding error in record book (6)
- A clay-pit worked out? That's unusual (8)
- Worker accepting two hair-styles should be ample? (8)
- Vehicle in excellent condition (6)
- City playing Celtic, exemplifying different styles? (8)
- Where you'd have found Greek philosopher solving my clue? (6)
- Boast about period dress (4)
- Girl's after musical instrument—no piano, wind instrument (9)
- Expensive pieces must be entrusted to English conservation body, sweetie-pie (10)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL. Please use the best number and postcode, and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: B Palford, Portliver, T Foster, Curtis, Hoveton, R Galloway, Edinburgh, D Rolls, Leicester, N Swann, Workington.

#### DOWN

- Uncommonly bad opening for article, agreed? It's discarded (9)
- The men sounded cocky (4)
- Content small child must receive illuminated address, firstly (8)
- Student element required to assimilate a classical subject (5)
- Woollen garment put on by a chap, originally a heart patient (7)
- Utensils supplied for meal are new, specially ordered (10)
- Views given by German people (6)
- Rich, parsimonious, happy medium? (6, 4)
- Cat's-paw seen to behave timidly? (9)
- Scramble in which man's caught in pincer movement (8)
- A service heartless pawnbroker's first to forget (7)
- Type of acid making ice act unpredictably (6)
- Knitting pattern sailor left in church? (5)
- Not charged, hence at liberty (4)

### ON MONDAY

"Since 1995 our approach to the game has changed and our fitness is better. This team is definitely the fastest and we play a far more expansive game"

Sean Fitzpatrick talks to Ian Stafford about leading the All Blacks



### TODAY

ELEVEN PAGES OF SPORT BEGIN ON PAGE 16

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### FOOTBALL

## Venables 'on brink of leaving Portsmouth'

There was confusion over the future of Terry Venables' role at Portsmouth last night after he denied rumours that he had resigned as the chairman of the First Division club. He confirmed, however, that he would be considering his future at Pompey over the weekend.

Venables, who in his capacity as the coach to the Australian national side saw them fail to qualify for the World Cup last week, failed to arrive for training at Portsmouth's Stoneham training ground yesterday and staff were told he had resigned.

It appeared last night, however, that Venables is involved in a dispute over his stake in the club with his fellow shareholder, Martin Gregory.

Venables blamed a "lack of communication" for the series of events which has seen Gregory decide not to transfer a 51 per cent shareholding in the club to the former England and Tottenham manager.

Venables was said to have withdrawn his offer to come to the financial rescue of the club, which would have meant paying staff wages from his own pockets.

Speaking on Meridian Television last night, Venables said: "As of now I'm still the chairman of the club until such time as I choose different. I expect to make a decision on my future at the club by the end of the weekend."

"The club's financial crisis was solved yesterday, you can speak to the bank and I'm sure they'll tell you that everything was solved until last night."

Talking about Gregory, Venables added: "If he is saying I'm spending too much time with Australia, he may or may not be right. But it was stressed from day one that I had a contract with Australia and I had to fulfill it."

Venables said if he does decide to resign the shares will still be his. He added: "Of course I will still have direct control of the club."

According to the Gregory family, the shares have never been registered in Venables' name, and they have now withdrawn the offer of those shares.

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# YOUR MONEY

PERSONAL FINANCE, PROPERTY & MOTORING

Saturday 6 December 1997

Venables 'on  
brink of leaving  
Portsmouth'



Photomontage: Jonathan Anstee

## Survive Christmas without a financial hangover

Will yours be a plastic Christmas? For millions of us, that's exactly how we propose to spend an estimated 10 per cent of our annual disposable income. Using credit to pay for the festivities is not necessarily a bad idea. But using the wrong card can lead to bad hangovers in the new year. Iain Morse leads us through the options.

The people who run Harrods are happy this year. Punters are rolling in through the doors, tills are blipping and spending at the checkouts is up to the limits one would expect for so famous a store. A Harrods spokesperson says: "We are out of the recession and people feel confident."

But for the rest of us, whose spending is likely to take place in far more prosaic surroundings, the festivities can lead to liquidity problems, and not just the hangover type.

Credit cards are one way of easing cashflow worries. Most of us have one and, with more than 21 million Visa cards in the UK, the indications are that our plastic friend will bear the brunt of the Christmas bills.

Royal Bank of Scotland has researched consumer behaviour over the Christmas period. At RBS, Iain Goodwin thinks we have learned to use credit cards as a temporary source of borrowing. "We see a lot of card spending in the four weeks leading to Christmas. Last year this totalled £125m, with a 30 per cent increase expected this

year. In January, personal overdrafts and loans take over as customers refinance their borrowing."

The basic principle of card spending is simple enough. Most offer up to 57 days' interest-free credit on spending up to their limit, usually set at a minimum balance of £500.

But there are some snags, quite apart from whether you can afford to clear the balance. Securing the maximum period of interest-free credit depends on spending at just the right time. This in turn depends on when your monthly card statement is prepared. The art lies in shopping just after this date. The amount will be added to your next statement, with payment due 21 days later.

So if your statements are prepared on 10 December, you will have to pay by the end of January. If your statements are dated 20 December, you can delay paying until near the middle of February. Check your last statement for the date it was prepared and shop accordingly.

But if you can't clear the whole balance by the due date, most cards from high street banks offer no interest-free credit. Instead, they charge daily on the whole amount of the balance. Late payment usually costs £10 to £12, with NatWest top at £20.

The exact basis on which interest is charged may also vary. Some cards, like Bradford & Bingley's, charge from date of purchase. Others, like TSB's, charge from the date at which a purchase is charged to your account. A gap of two days between spending and when the charge is added is average. If you use the card just once each

month and pay it off in full, then charging from date of purchase will add 24 days of interest to the annual cost of your card.

In exchange for notional periods of free credit, you do pay more expensive annual percentage rates (APRs), mostly between 18 and 21 per cent. Worse still, lenders add between 1 and 2 per cent to this on credit

the "double-dipping" option, where spending entitles you to loyalty points, cash off your gas bills, Air Miles and a plethora of special offers.

Store cards are more expensive. Aside from John Lewis, charging 18 per cent APR, most levy rates between 29 and 30 per cent. Timecard, valid at Comet, Woolworths

on outstanding balances. The best deal comes from Alliance & Leicester at 9.5 per cent, but most cost 15 per cent or more, with Clydesdale and RBS coming top at 19.56 per cent. Monthly arrangement fees of around £10 will usually be added. To get the best deal you have to switch banks, and it may be too late in the day to do it for this Christmas.

Unsecured loans are another option, but care is needed. As a general rule, the shorter the term and the smaller the amount borrowed, the higher the APR. This will be fixed at outset, with monthly repayments combining interest and capital.

If early redemption of the loan is planned, expect to be penalised with an excess charge of two months' interest.

On loans of £500 over six months, expect to pay not less than 16.9 per cent from Midland and as much as 25.8 per cent from Yorkshire Bank.

Some lenders also offer flexible loans with no minimum repayment period and lump sum repayment facilities.

Clydesdale Bank is competitive with an EAR of 19.2 per cent on loans between £500 and £5,000, repayments on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis and no early redemption penalty. Drawbacks include a £35 arrangement fee and minimum £100 drawdown, but if you want the early redemption option, this is good value.

If in doubt about whether you can afford Christmas, apply the Scrooge test: which is worse, being in debt, or not spending at all? And remember, he only had to deal with the Ghost of Christmas Past.

**'We see a lot of card spending in the four weeks before Christmas. Last year this totalled £125m. In January, overdrafts take over'**

Many cards offer extra "free" benefits: loyalty points, travel insurance and purchase protection. For instance, Alliance & Leicester offers cover against loss, theft or accidental damage for 100 days on purchase values between £50 and £5,000. Cover is all risk, but includes a clause stating "unless the item is otherwise insured", in which case you can't claim.

Loyalty points are also on offer from card providers. Spend £250 with Sainsbury's Reward Card and you accumulate points enough for a store voucher worth £2.50.

Using credit cards allows

and B&Q, comes top with a rate of 31.90 per cent. There are alternatives. New bank cards such as Royal Bank of Scotland's Advanta, are now being launched with discounted rates. Advanta's APR is just 9.9 per cent, but only until July next year, when it goes up to 18.55 per cent, giving you six months to pay for Christmas presents at an attractive rate.

Elsewhere, the Co-operative Bank offers its Advantage Visa card with a discounted APR of 7.9 per cent until April, when rates go up to 10.9 per cent. This is cheap borrowing, but there is no interest-free period.

According to the Co-op's Dave Smith: "We've segmented the market and aim for those who want to use a card as a continuous source of credit." The card is open to non-account holders at the Co-op.

Personal overdrafts charge equivalent annual rates (EARs)

### Best borrowing deals - a Christmas selection

#### Cards

Co-operative Bank Advantage Visa offers 7.9% APR until 31 March 1998, then 10.9%. Phone 0800 109000

#### RBS Advanta

offers 9.90% APR until 1 July 1998, then 17.9%. Phone 0800 077770

#### Loans (£500 over six months)

Midland Bank (unsecured) 19.9% APR. Phone 0800 180180

Clydesdale Bank (flexible) 19.2% EAR. Phone 0800 240024

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### INSIDE

3/NIC CIGUTTI  
ISAs in all their glory  
5/JONATHAN DAVIS  
Stocking fillers

7/RODDY KOHN  
Motorway madness  
9/FELICITY CANNELL  
New Monopoly board

11/DAVID JACKSON  
Break for the border  
12/JANE WILBERT  
Hot car speculators burnt





## 3/PERSONAL FINANCE

THE INDEPENDENT  
SATURDAY  
6 DECEMBER 1997

## ISAs won't encourage more people to save

The Government's proposals for a new tax-free Individual Savings Account (ISA) to replace PEPs and Tessas were unveiled this week. ISAs have been heralded as Labour's mechanism for promoting a greater savings culture among the less well-off in our society. Nic Cantti looks at what they mean and how you can maximise the options available to you.

**What are ISAs?**  
The Individual Savings Account is the replacement for personal equity plans (PEPs) and tax-exempt savings schemes (Tessas). It will be introduced in April 1999. As with PEPs, income paid from the ISA will be tax-free. Gains on investments inside the ISA will also be tax-free, allowing your capital to accumulate. In addition, the Government is proposing to pay a 10 per cent tax credit on dividends from UK equities for the first five years of the scheme.

**How does the ISA compare with a PEP?**  
At present, you can invest up to £6,000 a year in a general PEP which can include corporate bonds. Additionally, you may invest £3,000 in the shares of a single company. Other than the annual allowance, there is no

upper limit on PEP investments.

Tessas allow a maximum investment of £9,000 over five years, £3,000 of which can be tucked away in the first year, £1,800 in years two, three and four, and £600 in the final year. They allow withdrawals with loss of tax benefits. Follow-on Tessas, which began to be offered in 1996, allow a maximum investment in year one of £9,000.

ISAs will allow a maximum investment of £5,000 a year. This can be a mixture of cash, shares and even insurance policies (see below).

There is no minimum, unlike most PEPs, which demand regular savings of at least £25 a month. The Government expects that supermarkets and similar outlets will be prepared to set up ISA accounts into which even a few pounds can be paid.

**Is there an upper limit on funds I can stash in an ISA?**  
Unlike PEPs, there will be a cap of £50,000 on the amount that can be placed in ISAs. This is without time limit: if it takes 20 years to reach that amount, fine. Or if starting from scratch, you can do it in 10 years.

**What else is different?**  
Again, unlike PEPs, you will be allowed to place up to £1,000 of that £5,000 annual allowance into a cash deposit account, with instant access. Withdrawals will not mean loss of tax incentives.

It will also be possible for up to £1,000 of the ISA's annual allowance to be in the guise of an insurance policy, so that they too enjoy tax-free benefits. This is aimed at friendly societies.

**What will happen to PEPs when the ISA comes in?**  
It will be possible to transfer all

your PEP holdings into the ISA. The transitional period in which this is expected to happen is between 6 April and 6 October 1999. Transfers are subject to the £50,000 upper ceiling.

**Will transfers be easy?**  
The details have not been worked out. But PEP providers, together with banks, building societies and supermarkets, will be expected to apply to become ISA providers. The Government believes they will want to effect transfers for free.

The theory is that, as with PEPs, providers notify the Inland Revenue of subscriptions made. Investors will not be required to declare income or capital gains arising from ISAs on their tax returns.

**What happens if I do not transfer my PEPs into the ISA before the transitional period ends?**

The consultative document implies you will be subject to tax on capital gains from the April cut-off point. Income from a PEP will also be taxed at your marginal rate.

**What happens if I have more than £50,000 invested in PEPs?**  
Sorry, the most you can shift into the ISA is £50,000. The rest probably will be subject to tax from April 1999.

**What happens if I have a PEP mortgage?**  
Lenders calculate that regular premiums of about £166 a month into a PEP/ISA (equivalent to the £50,000 limit over 25 years) will be worth £125,000 at maturity, assuming growth rates of 9 per cent.

This may prove insufficient for homes in London and the South-east of England and takes no account of sharp falls

in equity prices over that period. Of course, couples would be able to use a double allowance.

**Should I still invest in PEPs?**  
Yes, especially if you are a higher-rate taxpayer. Tax exemptions will apply between now and April 1999, including dividends paid in this period and you will be able to transfer into the ISA, subject to the limit.

**What about Tessas?**  
The Government says you keep your Tessa to the end of its five-year life. Thereafter, you can transfer the capital from it into the ISA, but not the interest, subject to the £50,000 cap.

**Will I be able to keep on paying into the Tessa after April 1999?**  
We don't know. If you start one now, you will be able to put in up to £4,800 before April 1999. One potential problem is that only £1,000 of each year's contributions can be held in cash. This appears to suggest that most Tessa holders won't be able to keep all their funds in cash after transfer.

**Will ISAs encourage a greater "savings culture"?**  
It's doubtful. Generally, saving money requires a surplus of income over expenditure. Telling someone they will get an extra £5 a year (compound) if they save £30 a month for a year is unlikely to be enticing if they don't know where to find the money for their gas bill.

## INTERNET INVESTOR



ROBIN AMLÔT

**Drive a hard bargain with car insurance**

There is something about buying motor insurance which tends to bring out a reaction in many people remarkably similar to that occasioned by sitting in a dentist's chair with the drill being revved up next to them. If you really cannot face going to see a broker or an agent to sort out your insurance, you can always check out what is available on the web.

Using an on-line insurance provider, you can make your own insurance decisions when it suits you, a principle already accepted by the financial services industry in what marketing insiders call the Martini business model - customers increasingly want to do business "any time, any place, anywhere".

In theory at least, we may reasonably expect the savings thus made to be passed on to us in the shape of more competitive insurance quotations.

Several insurance providers and insurance brokers have websites which offer you a form to fill in. In return, they will, in most cases, email you an insurance quotation.

At present, a significantly small number of websites offer a full on-line service. In fact, there are only two: Eagle Star Direct, the on-line arm of an established telesales operation, and Screentrade, a new on-line insurance brokerage, quoting premiums from a range of insurers.

Eagle Star Direct was set up in 1989 and has had a presence on the web since 1995. It claims to offer savings of 15 per cent for people who pay via the website.

Screentrade Motor offers quotations from a panel of eight insurers: AGF, Bishopsgate, Folgate, GAN, ITT London & Edinburgh, Norwich Union, Royal & Sun Alliance, and Zurich. The site will offer home and contents cover in early 1998.

Screentrade also hopes to add more companies to its panel of insurers.

To insure a car through Screentrade, you access the site and complete the on-line form. Once you have filled in your details and submitted the form, the system returns a list of quotes from which you may make a selection. Alternatively, you can resubmit the form, altering the details in order to reduce the premiums offered by increasing the excess you are prepared to pay or by reducing the number of insured drivers.

If you need to exit Screentrade, you can return up to one week later and not have to re-enter your requirements, providing you have made a note of your session reference number.

This can be useful if you need to exit the website to check the details of your car, or your insurance policy, for example.

Both Eagle Star Direct and Screentrade will accept payment via credit or debit card. Cover takes effect once the card transaction is confirmed and your insurance documentation is mailed out the following working day.

**Eagle Star Direct:**  
[www.eagledirect.co.uk](http://www.eagledirect.co.uk)  
**Screentrade:**  
[www.screentrade.com](http://www.screentrade.com)

## Make the most of the Tessa loophole that has opened

As with all new savings environments, the ISA will both remove opportunities to maximise your income or capital and open up fresh ones.

Perhaps the most significant one is the loophole that appears to have opened up on the Tessa front. As the main piece describes, it will be possible to keep Tessas to the end of their five-year life, beyond the April 1999 start-up date for ISAs.

At maturity, you shift the money into the ISA, subject to the £50,000 limit. Unfortunately, it is not yet clear whether pay-

ments into the Tessa will be allowed to continue beyond then. But even the £4,800 maximum that can be invested before then should mature into a tidy sum.

The Government's consultative document implies that transferring interest from the Tessa into the ISA will not be possible. Here, it may be possible to make use of several flexible mortgage products.

Take the Legal & General Flexible Reserve mortgage. It currently charges a variable rate of 7.95 per cent. You agree a monthly mortgage payment on which in-

terest is calculated daily, allowing for speedier capital repayments.

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SAVINGS RATES	
Direct Line Instant Access Accounts	
UP TO 7.00% GROSS*	
MORTGAGE RATE	
Direct Line Standard Variable Mortgage Rate	
VARIABLE RATE	7.59%

PERSONAL LOAN RATES	
Direct Line Personal Loans	
AMOUNT OF LOAN	APR
£3,000	5.79%
£6,000	5.79%

All rates correct as at 1st December 1997.

0181 667 1121	SAVINGS
0181 649 9099	MORTGAGES
0181 680 9966	PERSONAL LOANS



Source: Direct Line Financial Services. For further information about the Direct Line products listed above, please phone the appropriate number quoting ref. INDBB37

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BRIAN TORA

## Little thought has gone into the logic behind Individual Savings Accounts

Far be it for me to carp, but there are times when I wonder if this Government thinks through the consequences of planned legislation. We now have a pretty good idea of the shape Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs) will take. ISAs should be more encompassing and flexible than existing savings vehicles. Yet by limiting the amount of money that can be contributed, the Government is effectively penalising thrift.

Paying for a savings incentive such as this by reducing the amount of tax saved by the better-off so benefits can be handed back to those who might not otherwise save is very laudable. But there is no evidence that ISAs will encourage savings by those who do not presently put money by for a rainy day.

Moreover, by picking the ceiling at a level as low as £50,000, they run the risk of chasing the very rich into other areas of tax avoidance which may not be as transparent as PEPs and Tessas and which will certainly not benefit the Exchequer. The middle classes could find there is not enough of a cushion to relieve the state of the burden of looking after them.

Now you may think I am being over-critical, but ponder a while. There are a number of PEP savers who have nothing like £50,000 committed, but intended to pay off mortgages greater in value through the savings mechanism already in place. What will happen to them? They will have to make other arrangements.

Then there is the lack of

any real incentive to use ISAs. According to the consultative document, there will be a 10 per cent tax advantage in holding shares this way and money on deposit will not be taxed.

Assuming £5,000 is invested, the income might be expected to be £200 a year, so there is £20 of tax to be saved. If the management charge for an ISA is more than 0.4 per cent, there is no benefit. Well, capital gains tax will be sheltered. But who really pays capital gains tax anyway? The current allowance takes care of all but the very seasoned or singularly successful investors.

Instant accessibility is an advantage, but I am not sure instant inaccessibility is. Stories of multiple PEP applications already abound, particularly as a result of windfall shares. Expect confusion over ISAs as people buy more than one each year at supermarket checkouts.

On balance, I am in sympathy with the Government's aim to make available a savings product that is universally acceptable. ISAs may work, but I doubt it. Quite what incentive has to be offered to those who might otherwise spend the money on lottery tickets or the 2.30 at Romford eludes me, but failing to incentivise the less well-off is no excuse for discouraging thrifty existing savers. Nice try Gordon. A little more thought next time, please.

Brian Tora is chairman of the Greig Middleton investment strategy committee.

### BEST BORROWING RATES

Telephone % Rate and Max Fee Location

#### MORTGAGES

Fixed Rate	Telephone	% Rate and period	Max Fee	Location
Lloyds & Partners BS	0800 228777	5.00% to 5.50	£200	
Northern Rock	0800 501400	5.00% to 5.50	£200	
First Mortgage	0800 080000	5.10% to 5.50	£200	

#### VARIABLE DISCOUNTED RATES

Discounted	Telephone	% Rate and period	Max Fee	Location
Barclays BS	0800 138140	5.00% to 5.50	£200	
First Mortgage	0800 080000	5.00% to 5.50	£200	
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	5.00% to 5.50	£200	

#### FIRST TIME BUYERS FIXED RATES

Fixed Rate	Telephone	% Rate and period	Max Fee	Location
Woolwich	0800 400000	4.00% to 5.00	£200	
Lloyds BS	0800 501400	5.00% to 5.50	£200	
Coventry BS	0800 120100	5.00% to 5.50	£200	

#### FIRST TIME BUYERS VARIABLE DISCOUNTED RATES

Discounted	Telephone	% Rate and period	Max Fee	Location
Woolwich	0800 400000	2.00% to 3.00	£200	
First Mortgage	0800 080000	2.00% to 3.00	£200	
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	2.00% to 3.00	£200	

#### UNSECURED PERSONAL LOANS

Telephone APR % Max LTV Fixed monthly payments (£500 over 5 yrs)

#### UNSECURED

Direct Line	Telephone	APR %	Max LTV	Fixed monthly payments (£500 over 5 yrs)
Direct Line	0181 667 1121	10.00%	£10,000	£100.00
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	12.00%	£10,000	£120.00
Allybank & Lender	0800 600000	10.00%	£10,000	£100.00

#### SECURED (SECOND CHARGE)

Direct Line	Telephone	APR %	Max LTV	Fixed monthly payments (£500 over 5 yrs)
Direct Line	0181 667 1121	8.00%	£10,000	£80.00
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	10.00%	£10,000	£100.00
Allybank & Lender	0800 600000	8.00%	£10,000	£80.00

#### OVERDRAFTS

Allybank & Lender	Telephone	Account	% per APR	Authorized	Unauthorized
Allybank & Lender	0800 600000	ALLIANCE	0.00%	£1,000	£500
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Direct Charge	11.00%	£1,000	£500
Halifax BS	0800 300000	FlexiCurrent	0.00%	£1,000	£500

#### CREDIT CARDS

Telephone Card Type Min Income Rate % APR Annual Fee Int free period

#### STANDARD

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Card Type	Min Income	Rate %	APR %	Annual Fee	Int free period
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Visa	£1,000	0.00%	7.00%	£0	30 days
Co-operative Bank	0800 100000	Amex/Visa/MC	£1,000	0.00%	7.00%	£0	30 days
Robert Fleming	0800 520000	Visa/MC	£1,000	0.00%	7.00%	£0	30 days

#### GOLD CARDS

Co-operative Bank	Telephone	Card Type	Min Income	Rate %	APR %	Annual Fee	Int free period
Co-operative Bank	0800 100000	Amex/Visa/MC	£2,000	0.00%	7.00%	£0	30 days
Amex Express	01273 605555	Amex	£2,000	0.00%	7.00%	£0	30 days

#### STORE CARDS

John Lewis	Telephone	Card Type	Min Income	Rate %	APR %	Annual Fee	Int free period
John Lewis	01244 661881	Visa	£1,000	0.00%	7.00%	£0	30 days
Marshall & Spencer	01244 661881	Visa	£1,000	0.00%	7.00%	£0	30 days
Sainsbury	01244 661881	Visa	£1,000	0.00%	7.00%	£0	30 days

A - Minimum age 22 yrs. Holders of comprehensive motor insurance policy or lender's existing customers

APR - Annual percentage rate

B - Buildings and contents insurance

C - Higher rate applies if income not arranged

LTV - Loan to value

MP - Mortgage indemnity premium

N - Introductory rate for a limited period

U - Unemployment insurance

All rates subject to change without notice. Source: MONEYFACTS 01882 500677 4 Dec 1997

### BEST SAVINGS RATES

Telephone Account Notice or term Deposit Rate

#### INSTANT ACCESS

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### CHEQUE ACCOUNTS

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### FIXED RATE BONDS

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### FIRST TESSAS

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### FOLLOW-ON TESSAS

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (net)

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (gross)

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (GROSS)

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### INCOME BONDS

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### CAPITAL BONDS SERIES J

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

#### CHILDREN'S BOND SERIES H (tax free)

Capital One Direct	Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate
Capital One Direct	0800 210000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
First Mortgage	0800 080000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%
Bank of Scotland	0800 570000	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.00%

B - Withdrawable via Bank Clearing System

F - Fixed rate (all other rates variable)

M - Net rate

P - By post only

All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice. Source: MONEYFACTS 01882 500677 4 Dec 1997

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# 5/PERSONAL FINANCE

THE INDEPENDENT  
SATURDAY  
6 DECEMBER 1997  
5

## Some light reading for the festive season



### THE JONATHAN DAVIS COLUMN



The consequences of the great crash in the Japanese stock market are still being felt

Photograph: Reuters

This has not been a vintage year for published insights into the art of stock market investment. There has been nothing published in the past 12 months, for example, to match the rich insights of *Against The Gods*, Peter Bernstein's fascinating history of risk, in the previous year.

Nor has there been such a comprehensive analysis of successful investment techniques as *What Works on Wall Street*, by James O'Shaughnessy, another remarkable title which appeared in 1996. However the past year has not been without its highlights and for those who like to pack their Christmas stockings with useful reading about the riches which they hope the new year may bring, it is not difficult to put together a list of reading matter.

First mention has, however, to go to an extraordinary book by the New York trader Victor Niederhoffer. *Education of a Speculator* (published by John Wiley) chronicles the life and thoughts of a man who went on from a career as an academic and champion squash player to become the high-profile professional trader, whose clients numbered George Soros and several other well-known investors.

Alas for poor Niederhoffer, who is no blushing violet, his hedge fund was wiped out a few weeks ago when he put most of its money in a disastrous bet on the Thai stock market and he became the biggest single casualty of this year's rout in Asian markets.

No such fate awaits Warren Buffett. There have been so many books about Buffett's extraordinary success as a stock market investor that the market for such books is in danger of becoming overbought. Roger Lowenstein's biography *Buffett* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson) throws a lot of light on the character of a man who is now almost as famous for his homespun aphorisms as he is for the prowess which has made him the second wealthiest individual in the United States behind Bill Gates of Microsoft.

But there are also plenty of gems still to be found in *Warren Buffett Speaks* (John Wiley) an anthology of the great man's wit and wisdom. Two quick examples from many - on the value of stockbroker advice: "Never ask the barber if you need a haircut." On the merits of simple businesses as a place to put your money: "You should invest in a business that even a fool can run,

because some day a fool will."

There are interesting anecdotes and some fascinating historical detail in a new history of the investment trust industry by John Newlands, *Put Not Your Trust in Money*, published by the Association of Investment Trusts. The book is a useful reminder that there is nothing new about the phenomenon of widening discounts which we have seen over the past couple of years.

I am not a great fan of "how to" books but two which I thought were a cut above the average this year were Bernice Cohen's *Armchair Investor*, the story of how a shrewd white-haired lady has taken to playing the markets from her home, and *Picking The Right Unit Trust* by Bruce McWilliams (FT Pitman Books), a guide to the techniques you need to find the most consistent performers in the unit trust sector.

This year has seen the 11th anniversary of the 1987 stock market crash, and with it have come a host of titles to commemorate this and the great market crash of October 1929. For insights into how market crashes occur, and why, there's still nothing to beat the account by Charles Kindleberger, *Manias, Panics and Crashes*, first

published in 1978 and reissued as one of Wiley's Investment Classics series.

The book has an interesting section on the great crash in the Japanese stock market since 1989. The consequences of that crash itself are still being felt today, as the malaise in Asian markets underlines. It is an open question whether or not the Japanese political system can adapt sufficiently well to prevent its severe dose of debt deflation spilling over into a wide-reaching economic crisis for the rest of the world. That issue will be one of the crucial tests of how the stock markets perform in 1998.

Finally, one oddity brought to my attention by a reader of *The Independent*, which may appeal to number-crunchers. *The Science of Winning*, by Burton P. Fabricand, is a detailed handbook on how to apply the techniques of betting on the horses to beating the stock market averages.

The author believes that share prices follow a random walk, but argues that it is possible to study the odds and make profits from backing companies which have reported earnings increases that are materially higher than the market has been expecting.

## UNDERSTANDING THE STOCK MARKET

Dorothy Parker, the American writer, once remarked: "Two of the most beautiful words in the English language are 'cheque enclosed'." In the latest in our series on the stock market, John Andrew discusses how to make these magic words appear before our eyes on a regular, and generous, basis.

Shareholders are part owners of a company. Should all go well, they will receive a share of their company's profits, known as dividends, usually twice a year. However, companies do not pay out all of their profits to their shareholders.

A proportion is retained to plough back into the business. Technically, undistributed profits are "transferred to reserves" in years when the profits are not as good, so the company can pay dividends from reserves.

When a company prospers, shareholders' rewards are twofold. In addition to receiving a regular income, they will also hopefully see their shares increase in value.

This is because the profits retained in the business will be put to good use. In turn, this should increase earnings and therefore the value of the business. The result to the shareholder will hopefully be an increasing share price, with dividends rising each year.

This sounds ideal - in theory. However, if you look at *The Independent's* shares page, you will notice that returns are generally low.

High returns are usually associated with riskier shares. The yield column on the page expresses the last gross annual dividend as a percentage of the current share price. It is the exception rather than the rule to find a gross yield above 5 per cent - most produce less.

Investors who are seeking income from their shares will

no doubt be disappointed, as they can generally secure higher returns from simple savings accounts.

Naturally everyone needs a contingency level of savings which provide instant access. It is also true that higher returns can be obtained from notice or fixed-term accounts. However, maximising short-term returns with savings accounts can be to the detriment of future income.

It is essential for every investor to have a comfort level of savings.

It is equally important for those who will be relying on investment income to consider taking steps to ensure that their income increases over time, even if this means foregoing income in the early years.

This may not be a route that everyone is able, or indeed would wish, to take. It requires planning and professional guidance.

Ideally, in addition to funds in instant access and term accounts, consideration should be given to securing a guaranteed level of income.

This may be achieved by investing in gilts, which are Government securities. These were the subject of this column last month when it was explained that when the current price for a dated gilt is more than £100, it means that the investor will make a loss when the security is redeemed.

Although such gilts pay a high dividend, it must be understood that a proportion of the income paid every year is effectively capital.

When investing for income, the advice is usually that 40 to 50 per cent of a portfolio should be in securities producing a fixed level of income.

If contemplating investing in gilts, professional advice should be sought from a stockbroker or independent financial adviser (IFA).

However, ordinary gilts do not give protection against inflation. An alternative course would be to invest in a fixed interest unit trust.

John Hutton-Attenborough, of IFA Berry Birch & Noble, says it may be worth contemplating the Commercial Union Income Unit Trust which currently yields an income of 7.6 per cent.

This need not be to the detriment of the invested capital. Over the past 12 months, a £1,000 investment would now be worth £1,177 if dividends had been invested. Over five years £1,000 would have risen to £1,780, which is an annual growth rate of 12.2 per cent.

In effect, the fund has grown by a considerable amount more than the amount paid in income over the years.

So as to spread the risk, any shares portfolio should contain at least six holdings spread across different sectors.

In order to absorb the cost of buying and selling the shares, the minimum economic holding per share is around £2,000.

This may not be affordable by more modest investors. However, there is a solution - unit trusts which invest in a mixture of fixed income stocks and shares.

Mr Hutton-Attenborough says the Jupiter Income Unit Trust is well worth considering. With income reinvested, the return over the past year has been 21.6 per cent and an annual equivalent of 27.5 per cent over the past five years.

However, the dividend yield is only 3.7 per cent. This means that £1,000 invested a year ago would have produced an income of just £37.

At the same time, £1,000 invested five years ago would now produce an annual income of £124.51, which is equivalent of 12.45 per cent gross.

This emphasises the fact that when investing in the stock market for income, one should take a longer-term view and be willing to sacrifice a low initial income for higher dividends later.

Readers contemplating investing in the stock market for income are recommended to seek professional advice.

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**NATIONAL SAVINGS**

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# 6/FINANCIAL PLANNING

## Tied agents may be attractive but there's a catch

Talking to an independent adviser is often presented as the sole option for those of us with a range of financial needs. But in some cases, salespeople who are only able to advise on their company's products can be an acceptable alternative. Simon Read dons his cricket pads to tell us the score.

If Yorkshire County Cricket Club hadn't relaxed its eligibility rules, it's fairly unlikely that the team would have remained a force in county cricket. Until relatively recently, players had to be Yorkshire-born to play for the county. So while other teams picked from the best in the world, Yorkshire was limited to its own.

The practice was clearly nonsense. In much the same way, comparing a tied agent to an independent financial adviser (IFA) could be said to be nonsense. From one you'll be offered a choice of the best products across the market while the other will only be able to offer you products from his or her own company.

Yet many tied agents are very successful. Why? Partly because we're all lazy

and partly because many tied agents are good at their job and offer decent advice.

The problem with tied agents lies not necessarily with the salesmen themselves, but with their limited product range. When it comes to looking at an individual's situation and recommending a course of action, both an IFA and a tied agent could end up with the same answer.

The difference is that an IFA will recommend the best pension, PEP, or whatever from across the whole market while a tied agent will be limited to offering his or her own company's product, whether it's any good or not.

"I think that, in all morality, somebody should not be allowed to sell to the public unless they can offer a range of good products," says IFA Alastair Conway, managing director of Clark Conway. "The idea that people feel they are getting good advice from a tied agent is wrong."

This view is typical of most IFAs. They are fiercely proud of their independent status and it is clearly galling for them to see so many people buy financial products through a tied agent. Worse is the danger that, by choosing a tied agent, people end up with the wrong products.

Yet this view is disputed by companies that use salespeople. Allied Dunbar runs one of the most successful networks of tied

agents in the country. "Our agents offer good professional advice," says an Allied Dunbar spokesman. "We spend a great deal of time and money training them properly, above and beyond the standards set by the industry. Additionally, our agents have the ability to offer the best possible service, in terms of ease of access and client servicing. They deal with one system which they understand very well, and so can spend more time meeting clients' needs."

Large insurance companies also offer unique confidence and security, according to Allied Dunbar. "We offer a guarantee that if one of our advisers has offered the wrong product or wrong advice, we'll offer compensation and put the client back in the right position. IFAs may not have the backing to do that."

When it comes to products, most insurance companies offer much the same these days, claims Allied Dunbar. Therefore it doesn't matter so much which product you buy - what matters is the advice you get. This is a debatable point. If a tied agent cannot actually offer the best product for a particular customer, it is unlikely that he or she will admit that and tell a customer to go elsewhere.

In reality, the tied agent is more likely to make the foot fit the shoe, rather than the other way round.



Salespeople have limited scope, like Yorkshire did before it relaxed its eligibility rules Photograph: David Ashdown

## Don't neglect the most important aspect of your portfolio

With shares in around 1,800 companies quoted on the main stock market alone, it is no wonder many investors want an adviser to help them choose a portfolio. Trouble is, finding a stockbroker is often as time-consuming as selecting individual shares. But, David Prosser writes, it is worth making the effort.

Several hundred brokers offer investment advice in the UK. Unfortunately, there is no perfect route to finding the ideal one to meet your needs. Sometimes, it can be

a matter of trial and error. Nevertheless, there are steps you can take to avoid ending up with an unsuitable adviser.

The first is to decide how much advice you need. For a basic service, you need an advisory stockbroker, who will expect you to approach him with ideas for deals. He or she will execute deals on your behalf but will also tell you whether he thinks potential trades are a good idea. Advisory brokers can also offer views on the general outlook for the stock market.

Some investors are happy with an advisory broker who divulges his opinions over the telephone. One firm, The Share Centre (01442 890800), even has a premium rate telephone service that you can call for advice on individual stocks. You then pay

very low dealing charges. Other investors, however, prefer more of a personal service.

The next rung up the ladder in advice terms is to ask a portfolio manager to make your dealing decisions. Advisory portfolio managers won't deal without asking your opinion first while discretionary portfolio managers take your money and tell you every so often what stocks they have bought on your behalf and how they're doing.

The more advice you need, the more you will have to pay. Portfolio managers, for instance, levy a fee at least once a year. Advisory brokers take a commission each time you deal.

Clearly, charges matter. High fees will eat into your returns quickly. However, if you're looking for a stockbroker who offers

advice, the quality of that advice is more important than the charges the broker levies.

Once you've selected the type of broker that you need, start looking for an individual firm. Apcims, the private client stockbrokers' association, is a handy starting point. It publishes a list of all its member brokers in the UK, with information on the services they offer. "This is a fairly comprehensive document," says Sarah McGuffick of Apcims. The guide, which is free, also gives a geographical breakdown of brokers in your area.

With the help of the association, you should be able to identify a number of potentially suitable local stockbrokers. A good way to narrow down the field further is to ask friends and relatives.

Then try to compile a shortlist of candidates, using the guide to check that they offer any specialist services you require. Do not feel you have to sign up with the first stockbroker you meet. It makes sense to visit four or five firms. The key is to find a broker with whom you feel comfortable.

When you visit brokers, ask about their experience with clients who have similar sums of money to invest as you. A broker should be able to give you an objective indication of how clients have fared with his advice.

It's also important to check on the resources that brokers have available. A very small firm won't necessarily fluff your investments, but a broker who has access to more research materials has an obvious

head start. In addition, ask about the qualifications of anyone who will be advising you and the level of professional indemnity insurance they carry.

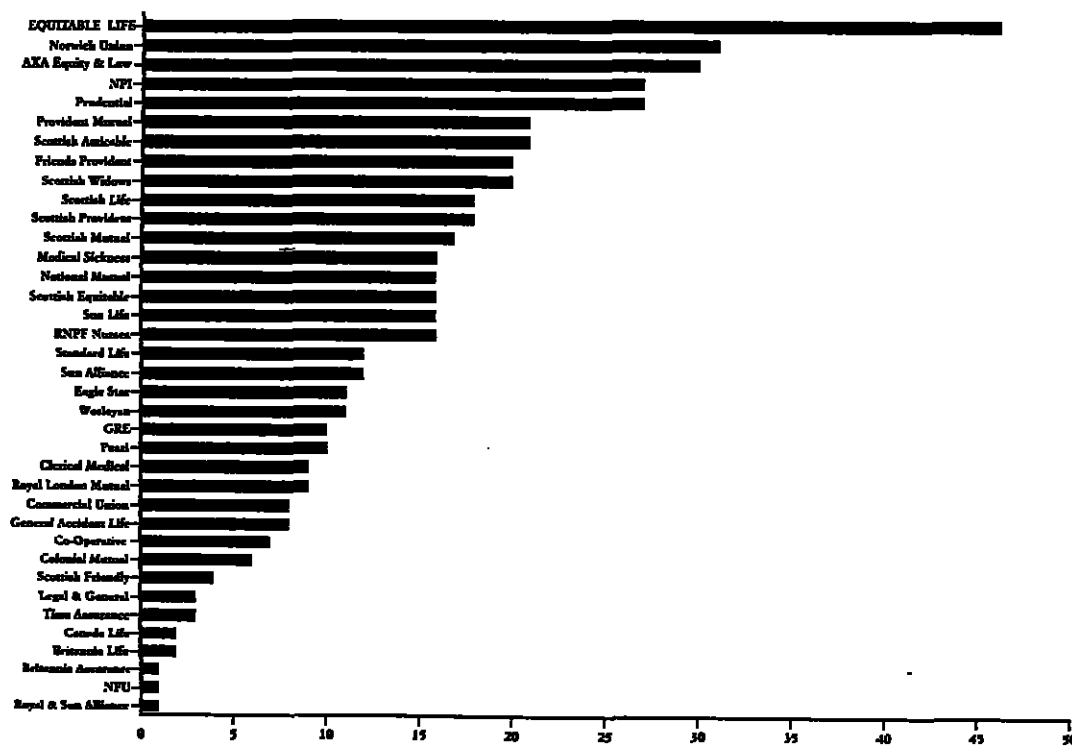
Finally, when you find a broker you like, make sure that he or she understands your aims very clearly. Your aims should be reflected in a client agreement letter.

It is possible that even if you're very careful about finding a broker you may end up dissatisfied. If this should happen, talk through your concerns with the broker and give the firm time to improve. Equally though, remember that you can change brokers whenever you like.

Apcims, 112 Middlessex Street, London E11 7HY (0171-247 7080).

## WHICH COMPANY WOULD YOU CHOOSE YOUR PENSION FROM?

### With-Profits Track Record of Results



Source: Planned Savings surveys of regular contribution with-profits personal pension plans 1974-1997

Many people put good investment performance high on their list of priorities when choosing a pension plan. Making sense of competing claims can, however, be a difficult business.

Well, our simple table above should give them the facts they need to make an informed choice.

The table shows the number of times a company has appeared in the top ten investment performance results for regular contribution with-profits personal pension plans across all durations measured - according to annual surveys by the industry journal *Planned Savings*.

The Equitable Life has had a top ten placing in such surveys every year since records began in 1974.

In fact, no other company comes close to The Equitable's tally of 45 placings out of a possible 56 over that 23 year history. Scoring highly one year is laudable, but it is consistency of results year-in year-out that gives people the peace of mind they want.

Please note that not all companies have submitted returns to *Planned Savings* in every year.

But remember, past performance does not guarantee future performance.

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One good reason why The Equitable has given its investors such great performance over the years is

because their money gets a headstart. The Equitable has commendably low expenses and so our with-profits pension plans have the lowest charges on the market. Source: *Money Management*, October 1997. That means that more money is invested on your behalf.

Indeed, The Equitable received a Five Star rating for its personal pension plans in a recent survey by *Money Management* magazine. So, if you want to feel confident in your choice of pension plan, ask for more information today by calling (0990) 38 48 58, or by completing the coupon opposite.

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## 7/FINANCIAL PLANNING

THE INDEPENDENT  
SATURDAY  
6 DECEMBER 1997  
7

## Eat, talk, drive – repeat each day

Breakfast at the Crest Hotel in Bristol is not quite the same as breakfast at Tiffany's. This is the unglamorous side of life as an independent financial adviser (IFA). But, Roddy Kohn believes, it's all part of meeting his clients' needs.

It's 7.30am and the breakfast meeting is to see how suitable HSBC's two-year PEP would be for my clients. Robin Kemp, managing director of HSBC, obviously thinks it is, as it provides capital security with the prospect of 20 per cent growth and matures just after the planned introduction in April 1999 of Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs). Labour's new tax-saving scheme. Robin is persuasive and I'm inclined to support his view.

This is the hidden side of my "practitioner" role, meeting fund managers and company executives to keep abreast of product and market developments.

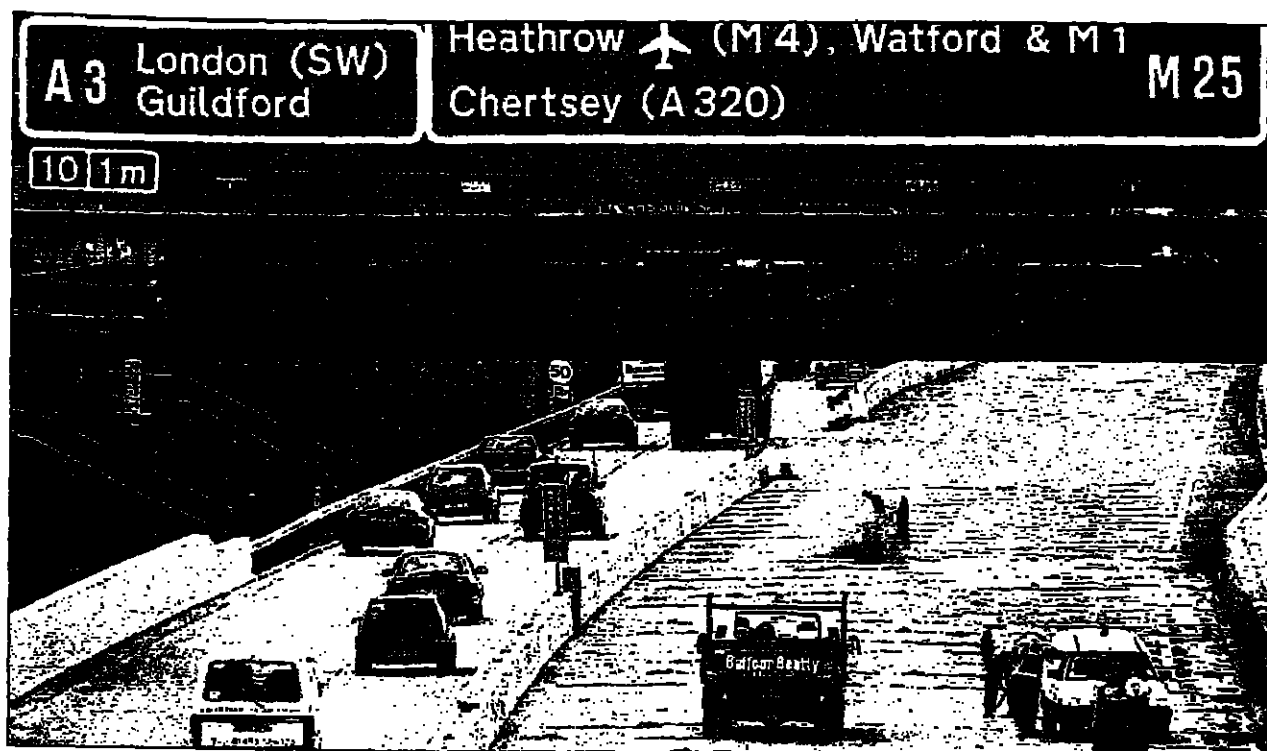
It falls into that category called "research" that appears on our fee notes to clients, to whom it must appear like a black hole into which they throw their money.

At 8.30am, I return to my office in Bristol. Twenty minutes later, I am in the Kohn Cougar offices, shouting out "Good morning" to the staff. My first job is to look at the post. Anything of relevance will be discussed with my colleagues, Neil and June, at 9.15am.

At 9.40am, I meet two new clients, Steve and his partner, who have travelled to see me from Oxford. I start with the regulatory formalities.

We rapidly move on to the main concern – should Steve transfer a pension he has with a past employer?

Although the fund is worth some £40,000, he is startled to learn that it will cost between



Driven to distraction: 'Just after 2pm, lunch is over, man and car are refuelled, and I head to London and the excitement of the M25. Life doesn't get better than this'

Photograph: David Rose

£400 and £800 to find out the best course of action.

Our fees include an allowance for professional indemnity, technical knowledge, regulatory fees, obtaining quotes, checking surpluses in any existing pension funds or whatever, and a whole host of other subjects concerning clients, including health and future prospects.

In the end, I tell the client to remember that there is £40,000 at stake and that he has a lot to lose in the long run if he is poorly advised. He confirms he wants us to proceed with the research.

After they leave, it's 11.15am and I travel to Basingstoke for a client's annual review. Before arriving, there are phone calls to be made – I'm glad I've had a hands-free phone installed in the car. One of the calls is to a client in Bath to tell him he has his trustees' agreement to invest some pension fund capital in Europe and the emerging markets.

Another call is to a client in

London who wants to arrange an income protection plan.

We talk about her likely income, what she needs to live on and what capital can be used before she would need to make a claim. I remind her about adding waiver of premium to her existing pension policy. This would take over the premium payments if she is ill for six months or more and will go on paying them until her selected retirement date or she returns to work.

This is something a permanent health policy will not do as the income it pays is not regarded as relevant earnings for pension purposes.

At 12.45pm, it's time to lunch with my client and we cover all his policies and investments. Some of his funds have done exceptionally well, showing returns of more than 40 per cent, while others have had mixed fortunes, especially his Johnson Fry Hy5 PEP and Hy1 single-company PEP. These are based on an American system of choosing the five

highest-yielding shares in an index with a computer-driven "buy and sell" operation for regular changes.

Both PEPs are suffering from a range of factors including regulation and poor sector sentiment. I advise him to sit tight because we always encourage clients to take at least a five-year view with investments, to which he agrees.

Just after 2pm, lunch is over, man and car are refuelled, and I head to London and the excitement of the M25. Life doesn't get better than this. Once again, hands-free, I use the phone to call the office and check my messages. It may be a pain, but the mobile phone is probably the most effective new technology toy that I own.

Ian Bowden calls from the Personal Investment Authority, the financial regulator, to request confirmation that the minutes of the last Small Business Practitioners Panel, that I chair, can be approved. We also chat briefly about next month's agenda.

Arriving at my London destination, it's now 3.30pm and I meet one of my female clients. We complete a gift and loan trust application form for a £100,000 investment.

This includes fielding the odd technical question from the company accountant, whose dry sense of humour and laid-back manner disguises a razor-sharp mind.

As the meeting ends, the rush hour has started. I use the slow journey home to make some useful dictation, warning clients about the dangers of high-income bonds. Among the phone calls that interrupt is one from the office to discuss tomorrow's agenda.

My day finishes when I arrive back in Bristol at 7.45pm. The night's my own, with no client meetings and no business dinners arranged – only tomorrow to look forward to.

Roddy Kohn is an IFA at Kohn Cougar of Wellington House, Wellington Park, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2UR (0117-946 6384).

## Get advice on putting your money to work

Setting your financial affairs in order is no easy task. Over time, you may have started up savings, investment and insurance schemes. But are these still appropriate for your needs or could your money be put to better use elsewhere? Abigail Montrose seeks advice.

Choosing the right investments can mean the difference between a mediocre and a good return on your money, while a review of your insurance and pension provisions could save you thousands of pounds over the long term.

An independent financial adviser (IFA) can review your overall financial situation and give you expert advice on making the right provisions for your financial security.

All financial advisers seek to give good advice but only IFAs can give "best advice". This is because IFAs scour the whole market, looking for the best financial products most suitable for your needs, unlike tied agents and appointed company representatives, who can only advise on and sell products from the company they work for.

Being able to choose from the whole market tends to be better than only being offered one company's products. No company will always have the best products or best performing funds in every investment sector. And few companies offer the full range of investments and savings products available on the market. With an IFA, not only do you know you are getting expert advice, but it also is unbiased. Of course, this advice does not come for free.

IFAs make their money in

one of two ways. Either you can pay a fee or they can receive commission from the financial products they sell you.

IFAs working on a fee basis charge from £50 an hour. The rate may vary depending on the type of advice you want. This may seem steep, but other professionals, such as accountants and solicitors, can charge more.

Alternatively, your IFA may be commission-based. You will not have to pay any money up-front for the advice you receive, but you will pay it indirectly. Many financial companies pay commission to advisers when they sell one of their products, and this is added to the cost of the financial product you buy. If your IFA is fee-based, he or she can ask for no commission to be charged or paid. Alternatively, the IFA can split the commission with you.

By law, your IFA has to tell you how much commission he or she is being paid. Commission payments vary between 1 per cent and 5 per cent of the amount you invest, depending on the product. Beware a sting in the tail: commission on some regular premium products is based on a calculation of the premiums you are expected to pay over the lifetime of the product. This is typically an up-front payment, which means most of your first year's premiums will go in commission.

IFAs have to hold professional qualifications. The basic qualification is the Financial Planning Certificate, but some IFAs go on to take more advanced exams and will specialise in a particular area such as investments, tax planning or mortgage business.

Choosing an IFA you are happy with can take time, bearing in mind that you want to deal with someone

who you are comfortable with and who you can trust. Recommendations from friends, a solicitor or an accountant can be a good starting point.

"You may even find your solicitor or accountant is able to help you yourself," says Anne-Marie Martin, acting chief executive of IFAP, a body which promotes financial advice.

"Some solicitors and accountants are qualified to give independent financial advice. If they are not qualified themselves, they may have an IFA arm or someone in the company who is qualified and deals specifically with financial planning."

To check if your solicitor or accountant is authorised to offer independent financial advice, you can call the Financial Services Authority central register on 0171-929 3652.

If you are unable to find an IFA via a recommendation, you can call the IFAP hotline on 0117-971 1177 for details of three IFAs in your area. IFAP recommends talking to at least a couple of IFAs before deciding which one to select. Most firms are happy to give potential clients the names of two of their clients.

When you meet an IFA, he or she should carry out an in-depth fact-find into your financial arrangements. This enables them to build up an overall picture of your financial affairs. Your IFA can review your arrangements. It could be that some of your investments are no longer performing particularly well and you could do more with your money elsewhere.

IFAP has produced a guide on the types of financial advice that are available, as well as a fact-sheet on how your IFA is paid. For copies, contact the IFAP hotline on 0117-971 1177.

## Thought for the day

Read all the financial ads, or talk to someone who already has.

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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.



# 9/PROPERTY

THE INDEPENDENT  
SATURDAY  
6 DECEMBER 1997

## Across the board, London is changing

Among those who have never visited London, and many who live in the city, Mayfair will forever be a rich - and expensive - navy blue, while poor Old Kent Road remains a dull brown. The reason? Monopoly, the ever-popular game which appears to have set house prices in those areas in stone. Felicity Connell investigates whether the board's assumed property valuations still hold true.

Monopoly's fame spreads far and wide. So wide, in fact, that the US resort of Atlantic City has even named its streets after those on the board.

But while Mayfair and the Old Kent Road are still well known, what about Vine Street, Coventry Street or Northumberland Avenue? A black cab driver may know their whereabouts, but a foreign Monopoly player might be somewhat disappointed.

These streets are part of a list which Victor Watson, head of Waddington's, the games firm, compiled as prime London landmarks with his secretary after a stroll around the city in the 1930s. Today, with the massive development of parts of London that would never have been seen from a tour bus 60 years ago, it may be time to update the Monopoly board.

Savills Property Consultants ranks Chelsea, Knightsbridge and Kensington as the top three most desirable residential locations in central London.

Knightsbridge and Sloane Street would have to be the new elite areas on the new board. Harrods was, after all, world famous even before the Fayed connection. And Harvey Nichols, (Absolutely Fabulous store, darling) ranks even higher among the shopping cognoscenti.

Does Mayfair still deserve a top spot? Of course, the area is prime office location for smaller companies who want a central London base. But, as Robert Bailey of Strutt & Parker, the estate agent, points out in the inimitable salespeak that can make silk purses out of sow's ears: "Mayfair now appears good value for money in comparison with other prime areas."

"We can only see this trend increasing with the decentralisation of many international compa-

nies in London giving up their gracious offices, converted from what were originally private houses (into) modern day office complexes."

Good value for money, indeed. For instance, Strutt & Parker has just sold a two-bedroom flat of just under 1,000 sq ft, in Charles Street, Mayfair, for £250,000. With other parts of central London fetching double that amount, Mayfair may have to be off our new board.

On the other hand, Park Lane must remain in second place, with its views over Hyde Park and, partly, as access to Oxford Street. Other areas of W1, most notably "Fitzrovia", estate agent talk for the streets around Oxford Circus - Portland St, Great Titchfield St - are becoming as popular as Mayfair.

Conversions from offices to luxury blocks are dragging in residents who want a central London address, while Oxford Street itself remains one of the richest shopping streets in London, despite some of the tackier shops along its length. Bond Street also holds its place, particularly with the birth of the designer megastore - Versace, Donna Karan, and the others.

If Northumberland Avenue were to go, one would at least expect Whitehall to be unchanged. Not at all. "It seems now that nothing can be taken for granted in Westminster," says a spokesman for London Residential Research of an area with a severe homelessness problem.

The Treasury Building in Whitehall is under threat from developers, and "if 25 or more residential units are proposed, Westminster planners might just seek a social housing component. Not many people would have expected council housing in the Treasury building."

Not all changes to the board are due solely to the rise and fall in an area's fortunes. For instance, Wapping can rightfully claim the place of Fleet Street and Strand loses out to the South Bank, which along with its galleries, theatres and concert halls also has one of the new prestigious addresses in London, the White House.

The building overlooks the river, with apartments selling at an average of £450 per sq ft, and penthouses at £1.5m. Further along on the Albert Embankment, Peninsular Heights penthouses fetch around £800 per sq ft, the most expensive be-

ing a cool £3.25m.

It is now respectable (just about) to venture south of the river, so the South Bank ranks alongside Covent Garden and Soho, both of which have seen huge increases in residential desirability, particularly with the removal of Covent Garden market in the late 1970s. Residential space in both Soho and Covent Garden, nonetheless, has strong competition from the smaller trendy businesses and shops.

From Long Acre, Covent Garden, take a trip along to St Katherine's Dock. With its combination of office and residential use the Isle of Dogs easily deserves a place.

The penthouse in the Berkeley Tower, Canary Riverside, is priced at over £2m, and both Fairbairn Homes and Barratt are vying to produce "one of the most sought after addresses in London", with penthouses at Dunbar Wharf and Pierhead Lock, respectively.

"That's all very well," you cry, "but I wouldn't want to live there!" You don't have to. You follow the lead of Far Eastern landlords. Buy it up, and charge everyone else the rent.

According to computer-assisted studies of Monopoly games, Vine Street, Marlborough Street and Bow Street are the most visited sites on the board. For a like-for-like comparison, we must go to the real tourist sites of Leicester Square, Piccadilly Circus and Charing Cross Road.

Angel Islington, having moved up a peg, leaves Caledonian Road to slot in with Easton Road and Pentonville Road, which can only gaze in envy at their neighbours, the conservation area of Barnsbury and spiralling Bloomsbury.

From here it is but a short slippery slope to Whitechapel Road and Old Kent Road, which still "represent the last resort of the underdog to hold out against the oppressive forces of the Navy Blue powermongers."

The original train stations on the board represented the different railway companies. After nationalisation they became

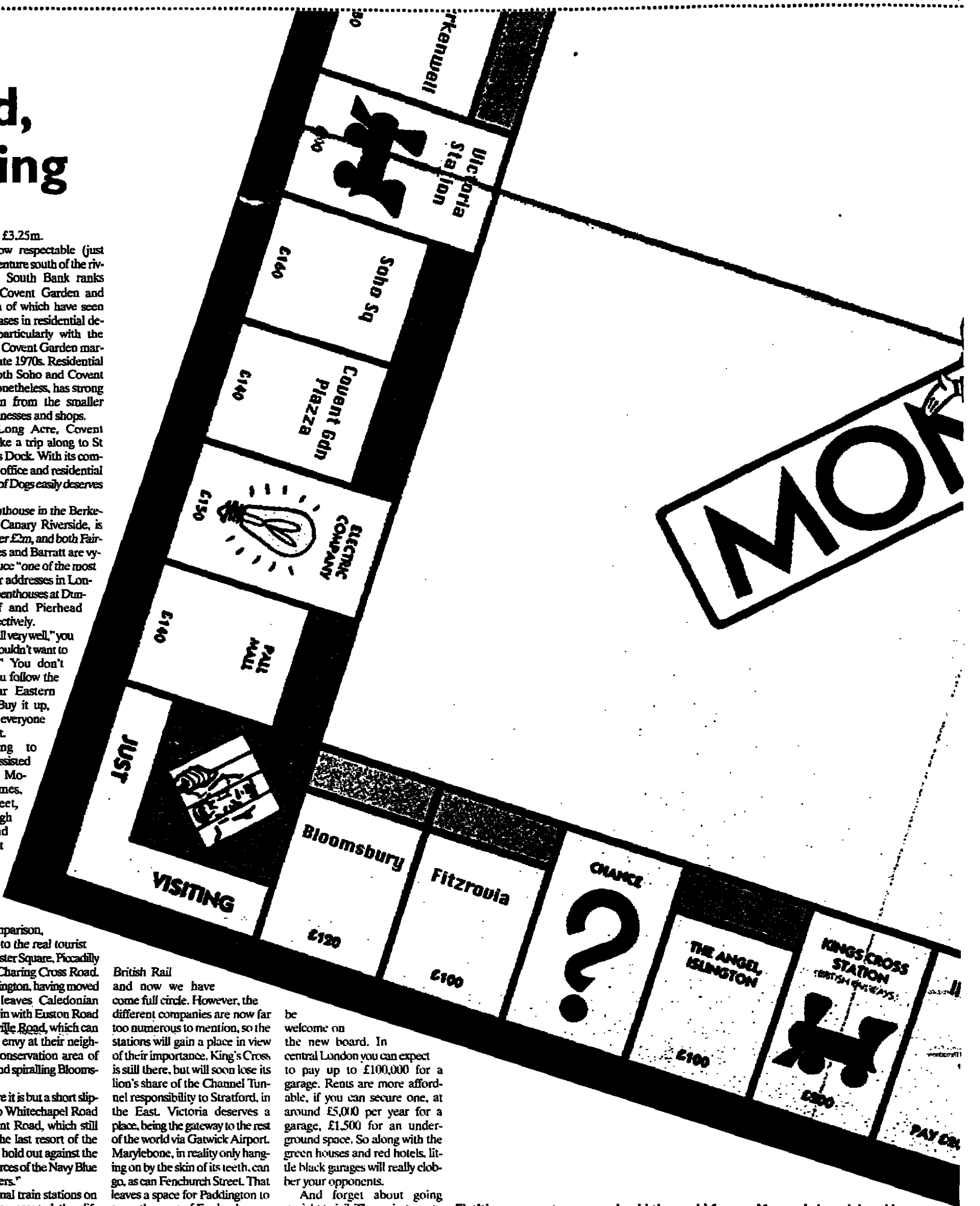
British Rail and now we have come full circle. However, the different companies are now far too numerous to mention, so the stations will gain a place in view of their importance. King's Cross is still there, but will soon lose its lion's share of the Channel Tunnel responsibility to Stratford, in the East. Victoria deserves a place, being the gateway to the rest of the world via Gatwick Airport. Marylebone, in reality only hanging on by the skin of its teeth, can go, as can Fenchurch Street. That leaves a space for Paddington to serve the west of England.

And as for the Free Parking square, parking at any price would

be welcome on the new board. In central London you can expect to pay up to £100,000 for a garage. Rents are more affordable, if you can secure one, at around £5,000 per year for a garage, £1,500 for an underground space. So along with the green houses and red hotels, little black garages will really clobber your opponents.

And forget about going straight to jail. The easiest way to immobilise a player is to wheel-clamp him.

Fictitious property games: should the world-famous Monopoly board, loved by millions, be subject to change as areas in London move in and out of fashion?



## Pests can prove lethal - for your finances

A midnight trip to the kitchen to pour a drink for her toddler led Fiona Brimthorpe to the flesh-creeping discovery that something other than cobwebs was alive and thriving in her house. Here, she explains what to do to get rid of creepy-crawlies that can go crunch in the night.

Stepping, or rather sliding, barefooted on a slimy slug the size of a small rodent, sent me reeling. It was just the start of a nocturnal nightmare - slugs of all sizes were regularly found hanging out of the larder or silently gathering in a great pow-wow on my ceramic tiles. Grass-crossed silvery trails were the tell-tale signs every morning of our unwanted visitors. We tried slug pellets - too dangerous for the cat and our toddler, grapefruit halves filled

with beer placed strategically in the garden - a waste of good beer and they didn't catch any slugs anyway.

In the end the solution was simple and environmentally friendly. Plant a half barrel in the garden, fill it with water, add plants and the magic ingredient - nature's slug predator - the common frog. Our house is now slug free and our hostas are no longer reduced to a stalk by midsummer.

However, some pests are more difficult to track down. Jane Hayball discovered a loaf of bread savaged in her kitchen one morning. "Then we kept finding walnuts scattered around the house, but the crunch came when some avocados disappeared one by one."

Mice were eliminated from the suspects list as "there were no droppings", and Jane finally laid the blame on squirrels. "We found a hole under the doorstep where we thought they could possibly get in."

Jane boarded up the hole and thought her squirrel problems were over until a neighbour spotted a few popping in and out of a gap under the eaves. This time she was taking no chances and called in a pest control compa-

ny, who discovered a drey in the roof space.

They put down poison and returned to remove the corpses. Jane sees squirrels as major pests. "They love chewing and could do quite a lot of damage."

Whatever pest decides to descend on your house, you're unlikely to get much help from your local authority. Environmental officers will probably point you in the direction of the Yellow Pages to get the problem sorted out yourself, if they don't have their own pest-control teams.

Following complaints from neighbours or tenants, some councils may take legal proceedings against private householders or landlords who refuse to get rid of pests. In very extreme cases they may even pay for the work to be carried out, although the money is a big deterrent to them.

Josef Church's landlord was most co-operative when he was informed that his large Victorian house in Hornsey, north London, was infested with cockroaches. "I was quite disgusted," says Josef, who was away in his native Sweden when his flatmates signed the contract for the house.

"But I suppose it wasn't the landlord's fault and he did act quickly." After the treatment the flatmates found dead cockroaches everywhere, but a few weeks later they started finding the odd live one again.

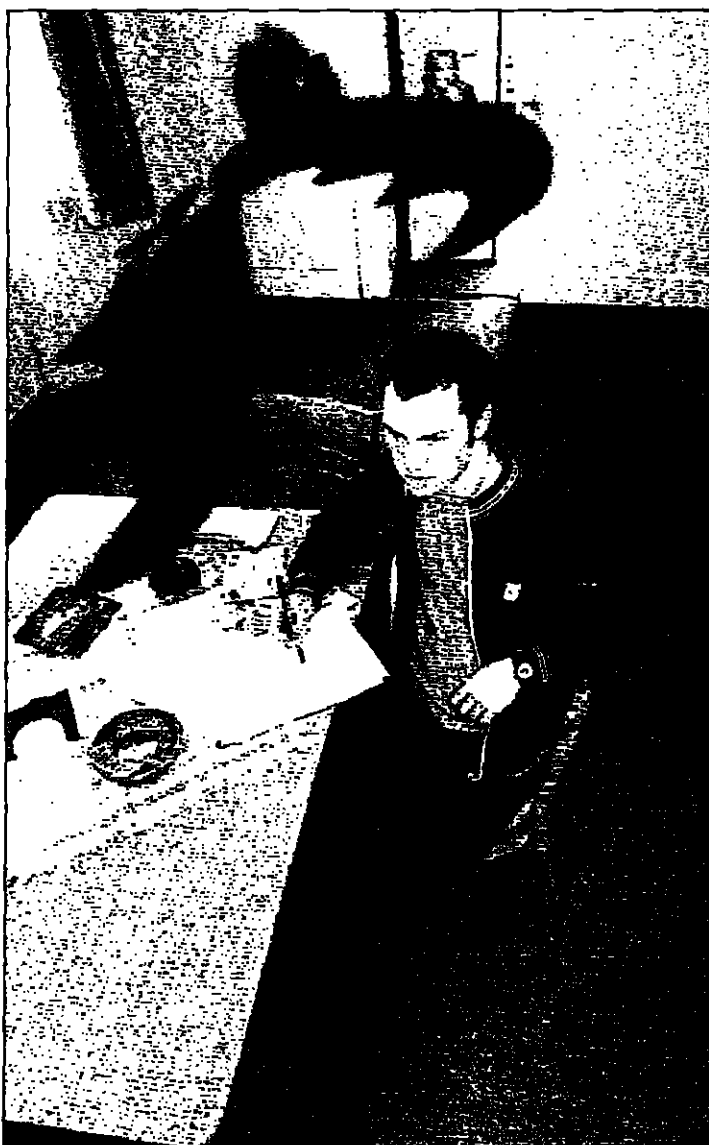
"I haven't seen any for about a week," notes Josef, "and I'm pleased I haven't ever found one in my bedroom. I've been keeping all my food in bags just in case. My mother kept calling me up from Sweden terri-

bly stressed at the thought of them in my food."

Residents in Ridley Road in London's East End took matters into their own hands a few years ago when Hackney council seemed to ignore the rats in-

festing nearby derelict shops. Rubbish from the adjacent street market provided the rats with a ready source of food and after dark they were everywhere.

A petition had no effect so



Bats in the belfry: but Josef Church was inundated instead with cockroaches in his house in north London. 'I kept all my food in bags just in case' Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

the residents took action. A dead rat on the desk of the appropriate council official was considered essential. After much discussion one resident - ex-forces and a good shot - reluctantly volunteered to do the business with an air rifle. Watched by his pyjama-clad neighbours in the dead of night he took aim. Unfortunately for him, the pellets were not fatal and the rats lived to run another day. When the shops were finally demolished, the residents' worst fears were realised when the rats rebusched themselves in nearby basement flats.

Tony Stephens, of Rentokil Initial, says that despite some horror stories the most common pests are house mice, which are usually removed by laying poisonous baits (note: DIY traps need chocolate, not cheese).

During the summer months Rentokil is deluged with calls from people discovering wasp or black ant nests. With around 15,000 to 20,000 wasps in a nest the size of a football you can have some sympathy with seasonal entomophobics. In fact, stored product insects (or SPIs as they're known in the business) are making themselves at home in our pastas and cereals.

"Although these insects are harmless," adds Mr Stephens, "you can understand the horror of finding an insect doing backstroke in your cereal bowl."

Bina and Andrew Martin-Davis's pests were similarly

microscopic but just as lethal, especially to their savings. "We'd just moved into our house in Surrey when I was suddenly covered in literally hundreds of tiny bites," says Andrew. "The previous owner had five cats, so we suspected fleas."

A spray from a pet shop didn't work and even treatments by the local environmental health department failed to shift the fleas. "Our son had just started crawling," adds Bina, "but I couldn't put him down on the floor - it was a very stressful time."

There was only one solution. They removed all the floor coverings and sprayed each room around the edges with a pesticide bought from the local vet. "We hadn't budgeted for replacing carpets, some of them were brand new," says Andrew, "but we had to get rid of the fleas. It cost us around £3,000 by the end of it."

They've been told that the eggs could lay dormant for some time and vibrations and central heating can make them hatch. "It's a good excuse for not doing any DIY," Andrew says.

And finally, the man from Rentokil would like to set the record straight about a certain dinner party tale. Rats do get into drains and, yes, they can swim up around the U-bend. His advice? Keep your toilet seat down.

# Requires investment



# 11/PROPERTY

THE INDEPENDENT  
SATURDAY  
6 DECEMBER 1997

## A break for the border? Don't expect an easy ride

Haulage companies who made a detour through Switzerland during the recent French lorry strike had a sharp reminder of the days of border bureaucracy. Such a firm's clients might have found themselves rattling around an empty home, while their worldly possessions were stuck at the frontier. Penny Jackson reports on the perils of relocating abroad.

So used is everyone to the free movement of goods within the EU, that the requirements of those countries on the outside can be forgotten. A move to Zurich may seem, on the face of it, to be as easy as moving to Bonn, but it is far more complicated.

"At the border you have to produce proof of employment and a permit to reside in the country, as well as other forms, including an undertaking not to sell anything within 12 months. If you don't have the forms, the customs charge a bond which can stretch to thousands of pounds," says William Karlsake, of Ward-Thomas Removals. "They can even impound the vehicle, although that is rare."

He suggests checking with companies offering a service to Europe that they are familiar with the concept of clearing customs. "Too many people leap the hard way. Everyone knows you need a lot of paperwork for eastern Europe, but they forget that places such as the Channel Islands and Gibraltar are not in the EU. It is the responsibility of the removals firm to have the correct documentation."

The cost of moving a household across the Channel varies between £3,500 for, say, Paris, and £5,500 for the south of Spain, at Ward-Thomas prices. It can cost a great deal more to move back into the UK, since services are costly on the Continent. One couple who moved to Denmark for long periods found it cost them £2,000



Tricky move: make sure the furniture looks used, if you relocate to another country - and you may need specialist help with the red tape

to move there with a small operator, and £5,000 to return. The second time round they employed a British company to collect their goods from Denmark.

It is also worth reminding people that where duty is payable, it is not a good idea to take new goods. "Make sure there are signs of use", is Karlsake's advice, since anything spanking new will be spotted by customs. Not a problem for one family moving to France, who not only uprooted their Aga, but took two oak trees from their garden, roughly cut into lorry-length planks.

Even within EU countries, the detail of settling down can be harder than arranging transport. Most companies employ relocation agents to smooth the way, and a European association is in the process of being set up.

At present, the UK leads the field within Europe, with France having the second most organised relocation industry. According to Tad Zurlinden, chief executive of the Association of

Relocation Agents, the emphasis differs. Some 86 per cent of the agents' clients in mainland Europe are companies, and 14 per cent individuals, while in the UK it is closer to half and half.

In Europe, 80 per cent want to rent and only 20 per cent to buy, whereas the figures for the UK are almost reversed. Patricia Roe, a partner in Map Relocations, based in Brussels, knows how daunting Belgian bureaucracy can be.

She says: "You have to know the right person to get things moving. Everyone must have commune registration and while some [agents] are very welcoming, others, like central Brussels, can take months. It is a nightmare because you need it for everything."

When it comes to leases, she finds the difference between a fixed term and an open-ended lease poses a trap for the unwary. "It is easy to make an expensive mistake if an assignment is suddenly cut short", says Ms Roe. Even inventories, or the so-called *état des lieux* (which, roughly translated,

means "the state of the place") require hours of an expert's time.

"They are massive documents which detail anything from cracks in the parquet to marks on the carpet. Unscrupulous landlords would make the most of them, but now tenants are beginning to be better protected."

In Germany, it helps to know that your accommodation may possibly be minus a kitchen, although in cosmopolitan centres it is becoming more common for them to be included, finds Helmut Berg, of RSB Deutschland, a German relocation firm.

Apart from help with registering and opening bank accounts, cross-cultural seminars prove useful. "If someone is working with a German team, it does help if they know about the culture and how things are done. This equally applies to the German employees, of course," adds Herr Berg.

But when it comes to orientation - part of a relocation agent's brief - spare a thought for Monique Lamontagne, head of relocation at the Eur-

opean Bank. When its staff started moving into the Central Asian republics, her logistical nightmares began.

She recently arranged for an English family to move to Almaty, the capital of Kazakhstan, which involved some 30 border crossings. "They took all their own furniture, since out there it is either extremely ornate or of a very poor standard. We also send out dried food twice a year. In the winter some accommodation does not have a regular supply of fuel, and we are having to arrange for their own generator to be installed. Then you have medical care and security to worry about," she says.

And now, after all that, she may well have to start all over again; the Kazakh government is looking for a new capital city.

Association of Relocation Agents directory, 01273 624455; Map Relocations, 0032 2658 8080; RSB Deutschland, 0049 69 6 0310 91; Ward-Thomas Removals, 0171 4980144.



PENNY JACKSON

## Waves from Far East fail to brake home market

Does any buyer in a new London development ask about the effects of Far Eastern investment? Do they worry that a falling-off in sales will make waves in the home market? Not according to Tom Marshall of Cluttons Docklands office: "They never asked before and they aren't asking now."

"What they do want to know, though, is how many buyers from the Far East are owner-occupiers. That is far more important for them, because understandably they don't want to buy into a development that is predominantly rented out."

Although Far Eastern investors have been of enormous help to the London market as a whole in the past few years by providing a solid financial base for the developer, the strength of the home market is far more important.

Savills Research finds the percentage of Far Eastern buyers of new build in the Docklands to be eight per cent. At the present time, the success or failure of a development selling in the Far East is hard to determine. Tom Marshall saw two well-known developers in central locations return with entirely different stories - one had done well, the other very badly.

Barratt, for instance, might well have held its breath during the recent turmoil in the stock markets having sold 50 units at its Globe View development in Upper Thames Street to buyers in Hong Kong in September. Nevertheless, none of the buyers has withdrawn. Prices start at £180,000, rising to £700,000.

Barratt does not take more than 30 per cent of any development abroad. However, where UK buyers might benefit is where developers either decide it is not worth marketing in the Far East at all, or they cut the number of units for sale there, putting more the way of the British purchaser.

The quality of stock going to auction these days has vastly improved. No longer is it a course of last resort for the vendor, whether private or institutional. At Savills second national auction held in London last week, Thornbridge Hall, a grade II listed neo-Tudor house with a stable block, sold for £850,000 to a Cheshire businessman who intends to restore it for his family's use.

Private individuals, as opposed to dealers, who imagine they can pick up a bargain may find themselves bidding against like-minded buyers. Even so, Robert Weaver of Savills finds it gives the most accurate picture of the current market since there can be no back-room negotiations: "No one's hand is being forced", he says. "Nor is there any reason to assume that the property has some inherent problem."

On South Ferry Island in Liverpool's Docklands, Crosby Homes is intending to launch the remainder of its Coburg Quay development over Christmas and the New Year. As the first residents move in, so the next phase, St Lawrence Quay, will be introduced. Apparently, the site appeals across the spectrum from "retired merchant seamen to young professionals." Prices at Coburg Quay start at £88,950. Sales: 0151 7342220.

## 'Requires investigation': the dreaded words that can make a survey valueless

Eighty per cent of people, through either naivety or stupidity, do not have a full survey carried out when buying a house. They rely on valuation reports, a much less complete picture of the property. Gnetta Vedrickas, who was one of them, offers her personal excuses, but wonders whether a full survey would have helped anyway.

I admit it. I relied solely on the valuation report for what is, yes, I know, the most important purchase I'm ever likely to make.

My feeble excuse is that I loved the house so much that I didn't want to know about its faults. I'm feeble but I'm not alone. Are the smug 20 per cent better off than me when things go wrong?

Karl Poll and Caroline Scott rejected two houses after surveys revealed major problems. They believed a building survey, often called a full structural survey, was worthwhile for the third house they saw.

Mr Poll chose a surveyor from the phone book. "We wanted the reassurance of an expert opinion. We talked a lot, and he seemed passionate about houses, which inspired confidence." Mr Poll and Ms Scott received a "huge report which the surveyor went through in exhaustive detail." It mentioned dry rot and suggested "further investigation." But the surveyor reassured Mr Poll and Ms Scott that it looked like a localised attack, so they need not worry.

On completion day Mr Poll walked upstairs and immediately spotted dry rot in a different place to the "localised spot".

"I spent a nightmare Saturday ripping plaster off walls. It was horrible finding more and more, and realising how much it would cost."

The three-storey home was riddled from basement to rafters, and cost £13,000 to put right. But should they have sought specialist advice on the dry rot?

"I trusted the surveyor's judgement," says Mr Poll. He believes the surveyor should have spotted the extent of the problem or advised them to investigate. "The report was full of trivia, and more significant things were lost. It was impossible to judge, because it was peppered with stock phrases such as 'requires further investigation'."

Mr Poll and Ms Scott spent three months in temporary accommodation while their house was being repaired. Were they tempted to sue?

"There was probably nothing we could have done, considering the number of caveats in the report, and after the trauma the last thing we wanted was a legal battle."

Would they have a survey next time round?

"I'd trust my own judgement, rather than rely on a so-called expert," says Mr Poll.

A surveyor who wishes to remain nameless insists that he and his colleagues are put in an impossible position. "Vendors jump up and down if we try to have a good look, and buyers leap on us because they haven't understood the more significant aspects. Fear of litigation makes us stick in caveats left, right and centre, and reports become worthless."

David Parkin, a chartered sur-

veyor, believes that trivia does creep into reports, and that much hinges on the definition of "significant": "For one punter a leaky tap staining the bath is significant; to another it's irrelevant."

But he believes that talking to clients can lead to misunderstandings, and is unnecessary if the surveyor has written a good report: "What I think I've said is not what you think I've said." He advises buyers to read reports while walking around the property, rather than rely on a telephone conversation with their surveyor.

Thalia Thomas, principal researcher at *Which?* magazine, believes buyers can minimise the problems by choosing the right survey for their property, and by making sure they find a good surveyor: "Speak to a few, and find one you feel comfortable with. A good surveyor should go through the report with you word for word."

Ms Thomas is also concerned about jargon: "Language should be clear and easy to understand," she insists.

Terence Denman, consultant to the Plain English Campaign, uses surveyors' reports as examples of how not to write: "They're absolutely addicted to writing in a dull, tedious way. Perhaps they think people are impressed by long reports, but they're soporific, and you switch off."

What are your legal rights, if it can be proved that the surveyor made a serious mistake when assessing your property? Well, the cards are stacked against homebuyers. Even if you are able to prove in court that the surveyor missed major faults that later prove expensive to rectify, you will still have to show that the property



Karl Poll and Caroline Scott: despite a favourable survey, their three-storey house turned out to be riddled with dry rot from basement to rafters; it cost £13,000 to put right. Photograph: Kalpesh Lathiga

would have been worth a minimum of 10 per cent less than other, comparable homes in the area, if you are to win compensation.

In some cases, this 10 per cent limit may in fact be higher, if the house is of unusual design or there are few comparable properties in the neighbourhood.

Harriet Johns is a rare case of someone who won such a legal battle, albeit out of court. One of the 20 per cent who had a survey done, she didn't "switch off". A survey of her Victorian property had shown no major problems. All was well until cracks appeared: "They

were everywhere, and went all the way through the walls."

An independent engineer found no subsidence, as Ms Johns had feared, but the roof had been replaced and not adequately strengthened. Ms Johns started a legal battle for compensation: "It was lengthy and stressful, and by the end I dreaded opening letters." Ms Johns found the costs enormous both financially and emotionally. Three years later the surveyor settled out of court and paid her £8,000 towards the cost of repairs and legal bills.

For those unable to face a legal

battle there's always arbitration, a process which, until last week, could safely be described as farcical. Surveyors had to agree to attend and, unsurprisingly, only 68 cases were heard in 10 years.

But the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors voted, at their extraordinary general meeting on Thursday, to make arbitration compulsory from next year. This move gives the chance of redress to buyers who are dissatisfied with a survey if they feel they have been misadvised.

Perhaps the 20 per cent are right to be smug, after all.

● Valuation report, around £170, is for the building society's security. It is not a survey.

● Home buyers' survey and valuation, around £330, not for older or unusual properties.

● Building survey, around £450. A detailed but not exhaustive report. Make sure you understand the more significant findings, and be prepared to pay for specialist investigation for problem areas.

● Any problems? Arbitration is compulsory from next year, and will cost £200. A quick, inexpensive way to get an independent decision on your case without going to court.



# 12/MOTORING

## Burnt fingers for hot car speculators

If there's a bubble, it has to burst. Those who bought the Mercedes SLK at an inflated price in the hope of selling on at a profit will have had their fingers burnt. The Jaguar XJ220 was another dud for speculators. But, James Ruppert discovers, there are always opportunities.

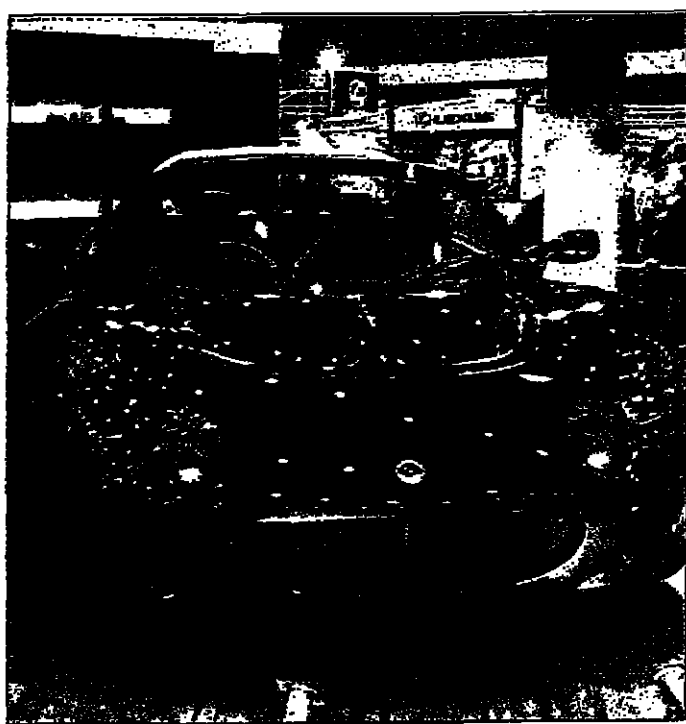
You only get what you pay for and when it comes to cars sometimes the list price just is not enough to buy the model of your dreams. If there is a queue for the car you want, instead of waiting years for delivery, then pay a little premium and get it parked on your drive tomorrow. That is exactly what happened earlier this year with the brilliantly marketed Mercedes SLK.

A sexy supercharged little roadster which at the push of a button became a proper metal-topped coupe and it was priced at only £29,500. That is cheap for a Mercedes, so the SLK was never going to be short of customers. So unless you were a Spice girl, or Tim Henman, the chances were you could not have one. However, if you paid anything up to £10,000 over the list price an SLK could have been yours. But that sort of premium is no longer required.

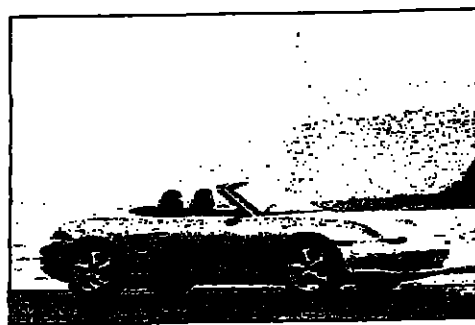
A casual flick through the more prestigious motoring classified ads in one newspaper turned up almost 30 SLKs. According to one Mercedes

dealer, "The problem is that everyone ordered them in silver, a traditional Mercedes colour, mostly with a red interior. They are now everywhere and anyone who thought that they could make killing may well get their fingers burnt. There is now no reason to pay anything more than list price for this car." Even so, dealers are still quoting 18 months' delivery, but those who needed to be seen in an SLK before the Joneses have either paid a premium or can now take their leisurely pick. As supply meets demand and the models become a more familiar sight on the roads, then the market inevitably calms down.

Other models whose premium price bubbles have burst include the BMW Z3, Porsche Boxster and Lotus Elise. Like the SLK they were reputedly commanding prices significantly above their retail value. The BMW has probably hit the ground hardest, because underneath that James Bond-starring retro roadster styling is a humble 3-series Compact as many owners have discovered. The latest six-cylinder 2.8 version now makes the original 1.9 seem ordinary and there are dozens on sale. Another distorting factor is the increasing numbers of left-hand-drive Z3s, SLKs and Boxsters arriving from the Continent. The strong pound has inevitably helped and easily undercut the British retail price by up to £10,000 in some cases. That is not good news to the private Porsche Boxster owner who was of-



Going, going, down: the Lotus Elise, left, the BMW Z3 and Porsche Boxster



fering his 3,000-mile car at just £500 over list price at £41,800. He was finding that only car dealers were ringing him up, and offering £5,000 less than he originally paid.

You cannot talk premium cars without talking to one man in particular. Tom Hartley. Never backward in pushing his premium car business forward, the ever quotable Mr "I may not manufacture cars, but I do manufacture their prices" Hartley is keen to reveal how good the SLK has been to him this year.

"We had around 30 per cent of the supply, which means we sold over 130. I'd say it is one of the strongest premium models I have known in my career."

But its premium life is over and Mr Hartley has moved on to another Mercedes, the CLK 320, which now commands up to £10,000 over

the list price, and the latest Porsche 996. "I have sold seven of those so far and some Porsche dealers haven't even had delivery of their demonstrator models yet."

Proof positive that some areas of the premium price market-place is as dead as a dodo, is the dodo-like Jaguar XJ220. Back in the late Eighties Ferraris F40 and Porsche's 959 supercars became £500,000 must-have toys and other manufacturers thought they could join in.

So did the premium-priced speculators, hence the tragically mistimed Jaguar XJ220. An impressive car, but in the harsh economic reality that was 1997 £415,554 plus VAT looked a little steep.

The lawyers got involved once the speculators could smell their burnt fingers and finally were relieved to walk away and leave behind a

£50,000 deposit. Now, the Jaguar dealer Grange has the last remaining R-registered, left-hand-drive XJ220s on sale, for £127,550. Plus VAT of course.

Although the Hartleys of this world see them at closer to £100,000 these days.

And are there any tips for the future? Mr Hartley does not hesitate in naming the forthcoming M Class Mercedes, an American-built Range Rover rival.

"Already sellers are asking me how much it is worth and buyers want to know how much it will cost for immediate delivery. Like the SLK it will be very good for my business and it will definitely fetch a £5,000-plus premium. As I've always said, there is no car I can't supply, at a price."

Tom Hartley 01283 762762; Grange Jaguar 01277 216161.



GAVIN GREEN

## Any car you like, as long as it's green

As posturing politicians and embattled environmentalists meet in Kyoto to help save the planet, it's a good time to look at how we humble drivers can contribute to a greener, more cheerful world.

Let's get straight to the point: what's the greenest car on sale in Britain? The most fuel-efficient car, according to EU fuel economy figures, is the Seat Ibiza 1.9 TDI, at 58.9 mpg.

But isn't that a diesel, and aren't diesels dirtier than petrol cars? They use less fuel, so create less carbon dioxide, the primary issue discussed in Kyoto. But they pump out more gases linked to respiratory illnesses. Mind you, modern car diesels are miles better than buses and taxis. Nowadays, they're pretty clean.

Fine, but I need something bigger than an Ibiza. And I don't want a car named after a chair. What's the most fuel-efficient car I can buy that can comfortably seat four people and carry some luggage? A Volkswagen Passat TDI (53.2 mpg). The turbodiesel Passat is not just the most fuel-frugal big family car, it's also one of the best. Nowadays, you don't lose any style or driving pleasure by buying economical cars.

I'm still not sure about a diesel though. The stuff is so smelly, and the only time I filled up a diesel car it stained my loafers. Then you're after petrol power. If you want to average over 40 mpg, there's a big list of good, small, petrol cars. You could try the Fiat Cinquecento Sporting (45.3 mpg) - which is a real hoot to drive. The Ford Ka (47.9 mpg) is also fun to drive and to look at, although the back seat is for kids only. And the Fiesta 1.25 (42.2 mpg) is a brilliant little machine, although it has a face that looks more like a carp than a car. If you need more room, the Fiat Punto 60 seats four easily and averages 41.5 mpg.

I've already told you: I need more space. Then buy one of the new Mitsubishi

Carisma GDI models (45.6 mpg), which uses a new-fangled direct-injection petrol engine, one of the new "Big Ideas" which should see petrol power soldier on for another couple of decades. It combines diesel economy and petrol performance - in a few years, most car makers will offer direct-injection petrol engines. It's the future, short- to medium-term.

And long-term? After all, surely petrol cars will always be dirty? Not necessarily. You'd be amazed how clean a modern car's exhaust is - although it still pumps out carbon dioxide, the greenhouse gas. But in terms of exhaust toxins, a modern car with catalytic converters and electronic engine management is about 20 times less polluting than a car from the late Seventies. Long term, petrol power will disappear, though. Some electric "hybrid" cars which use both petrol and electric power are about to go on sale in Japan, one from Toyota and one from Honda. They're greener than conventional petrol cars, although they're pricier.

Longer term, we'll almost certainly see hydrogen fuel cells. Most car makers agree it's the answer. Mercedes is probably at the cutting edge, although Bill Clinton recently hinted that the Yanks are at the forefront, as a way of mitigating their appalling environmental record. Mercedes reckons it will have a fuel-cell version of the A-class on sale in just over a decade.

In quick succession, other car makers will probably offer fuel-cell cars too. Potentially, these cars pump out no tailpipe pollution at all. The Kyoto delegates would love them.

How much do cars contribute to global warming, anyway? About 10 per cent of total carbon dioxide output, according to the OECD. But cars are the fastest growing source, owing to their explosion in the Third World. Buses and trains may be greener. But, as in the West, people would much rather use cars.

## Daewoo's time machine: it has nearly caught up with 1997

Once more, without feeling, new Daewoos have arrived. This one is an odd size and seems to have little character. But John Simister sees signs of hope ...



**Daewoo Nubira 2.0 CDX** £12,995. Engine: 1,998cc, four cylinders, 16 valves, 132bhp at 5,400rpm. Five-speed gearbox, front-wheel drive. Top speed 122mph, 0-60 in 8.8sec; 25-30mpg.  
**Rivals:**  
**Chrysler Neon 2.0 LX:** £13,795. Like the Daewoo, a lot of car for the money but little sophistication. Near looks.  
**Fiat Marea 2.0 ELX:** £14,647. More power, more flair than Nu-

bira. Well made, fun to drive. Relative of Bravo/Brava.  
**Hyundai Lantra 1.8 SE:** £12,899. Less pace and perceived solidity than the Nubira, but steers more sweetly.  
**Proton Persona 1.8 SE:** £13,365. Malaysian-built, Mitsubishi-based, feels cheap, much better to drive than you'd expect.  
**Subaru Impreza 2.0 GL:** £13,610. Basks in glory reflected from rally-winning Turbo version. Four-wheel drive, fine value.

it should be with 132bhp, but accelerator snatches.

There's some honing to do, then, before the Nubira nudges the best Western or Japanese standards, but it is, fundamentally, a proper if unremarkable late-1990s car and it does feel more solid and better-built than a Hyundai Lantra (its main Korean rival). Easy to be cynical, but open your mind. There, the notes even contain a trace of self-admiration.

I wouldn't want a Nubira but, given the warranty and free servicing package (three years for both), I would entirely understand if you did. Who knows, one day Daewoo might even have a history if the Far East's economic collapse doesn't prove terminal.

You'll have heard of Daewoo, the Korean conglomerate that sells its cars direct to the public and promises a whole new world of consumer-friendly car-buying. Its original range of two models was as crude and geriatric as the sales pitch was slick, but now these automotive white goods come in three new shapes and sizes. The one you see here is the middle-sized one, called Nubira.

Nubira. A nubile-sounding car, you might think. Or perhaps, if you heard the name out of context, you might think it was a new brand of mobile telephone, or possibly, give or take a vowel or two, a new ballpark pen. But no, it's a car. The company's engineers refer to it as the J100, which sounds much more high-tech. A pity the marketing men didn't stick with it.

Daewoos are already seen as smart buys by those who know a good car when they see one, and who find that a Daewoo does all they want from a car (go from A to B, start first time, and so on). The mainstream motor

trade will not touch them as trade-ins, true, but that is because it has closed ranks against the maverick newcomer. Either that, or the cars are unsaleable second-hand, perish the thought. To be fair, Daewoo has seen this coming, which is why the new cars are proper modern machines instead of General Motors cast-offs. Look at a new Nubira, and you see something which might even stand up on its own merits.

This car is a slightly odd size, bigger than an Escort but smaller than a Mondeo and not, as yet, available as a hatchback. The four-door saloon (there is also an estate) costs £11,995 as a 1.6-litre SE, or £12,995 as a 2.0-litre CDX which is the version I drove. You certainly get plenty of kit, including anti-lock brakes, air conditioning, four electric windows and two

airbags, plus a stereo which is made not by Daewoo's electrical division but by Sony. It comes complete with a mobile phone, too. It's a Panasonic, as it happens.

Korean it may be, but the Nubira is also cosmopolitan. The body was styled by IDEA of Turin, the engine comes from Holden (Australia's equivalent of Vauxhall, so the GM connection is not yet dead), and the whole project came together at Daewoo's technical centre in Worthing. A three-part front grille (Daewoo's heritage starting point) and enormous rear lights give some visual interest, as does the line which extends from the top of the front wheel arch to the car's rear. But I approached the Nubira with some trepidation, for this is a car which appears to have no perceptible personality. Would I re-

member what it was like the next day?

Worried that I would not, I took more copious notes than usual. And trying to relive the experience now, I'm having difficulty. So, let's see some of what I wrote.

Big boot. Cup-holders in fascia. No centre console - storage tray extends under dashboard. So far, so informative. Proud Daewoo crests on yellow under-bonnet filler caps. Roomy in back, but cabin narrow. Driver's seat too high despite tilt adjustment, graduations of steering wheel's height and backrest rake too coarse. Irritating chime if key left in ignition.

Yes, it's coming back now. So what about when it's actually moving, rather than sitting in a showroom? Floppy, gritty gearchange, steering woolly, rubbery and anaesthetised around the

straight-ahead, car does not feel naturally stable at speed on the straight. But holds the road well, and handles bends much more precisely than you would expect from the steering. Comfortable ride. Engine quiet, punchy too (so

## MY WORST CAR/ GLEN BAXTER'S PEUGEOT 405 GTX ESTATE

### I had a fire extinguisher with me. A pity, really

My worst car is parked outside my front door. It's a Peugeot 405 GTX estate which is now worth about 50p and I've resolved to drive it into the ground, which is the very least I can do after all the trouble it has given me. I knew that something was wrong almost as soon as I collected it fresh from the showroom seven years ago. I made the mistake of opening the sunroof and switching on the indicators, which blew a whole load of fuses. I ended up without any indicators. People must have been wondering why this eccentric in a brand new car was using hand signals. I tried to get home to Camberwell by only turning left, which meant driving via Norwich.

Just as the Peugeot was out of warranty a cyclist stopped me and said that there was a lot of

smoke coming out of the exhaust. According to the garage, it needed a rebore. After just 32,000 miles I had to pay out £2,000. At the time I'd booked a holiday in France and could not cancel, so I ended up smoking through France and cursing every Peugeot sign I saw.

Of course Peugeot themselves weren't that interested and all I got was a snotty letter from their called customer, couldn't care less department. I got the same response when the car needed a new engine at 62,000 miles, which cost me £3,000.

By this time I'd had enough and wrote to the Peugeot in France enclosing examples of my work in the *Liberation* newspaper and hinting that I could get some anti-Peugeot propaganda into their media. They



Never again! Glen Baxter has given up on Peugeots

weren't impressed and just sent back a snotty letter with a French accent.

Me and the Peugeot reached the low point in our relationship last year when the electricity caught fire. I opened the bonnet and inside was Dante's Inferno. Unluckily as it turned out I'd bought a fire extinguisher and managed to put it out. I lost my no-claims bonus and the car was just a few pounds away from being written off. So I'm still stuck with it.

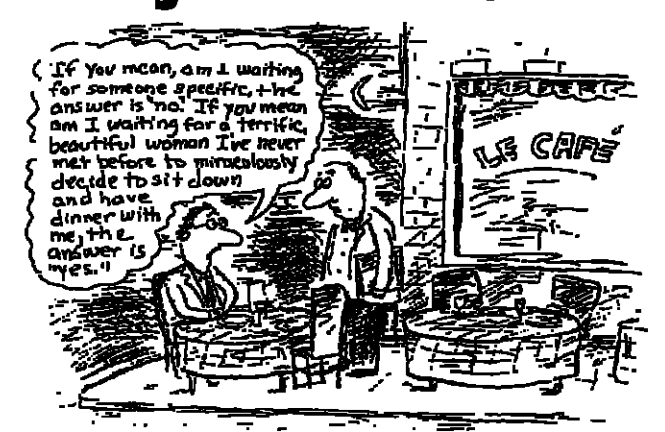
Fundamentally it isn't a bad car. The bodywork is still in good condition, it's roomy, comfortable and has nice upholstery. But when it comes to minor details like the engine and electricals, the car is rubbish. That is why I will never, ever buy another Peugeot.

Glen Baxter's 'Gourmet Guide' is published by Bloomsbury at £12.99. A selection of Glen Baxter's tableware is available from Poole Pottery.

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